PRIZE CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT ON PAGE 17

CHICAGO LEDGER

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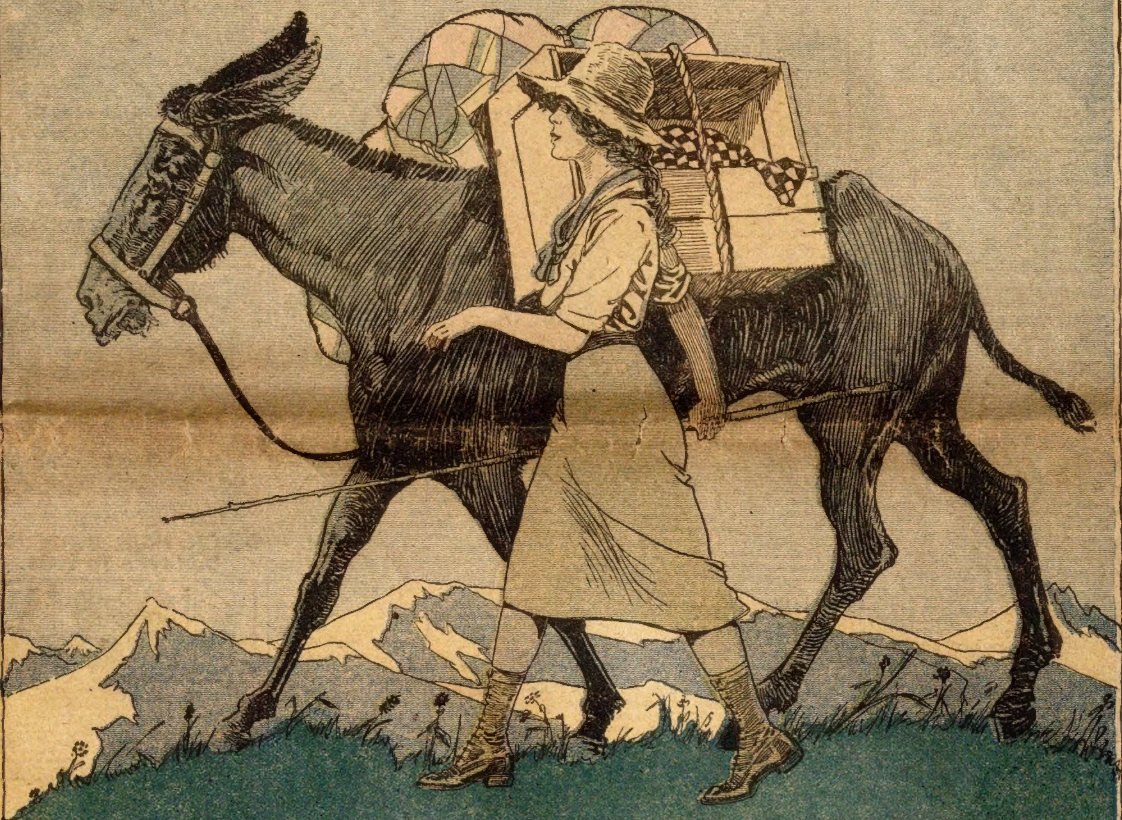

AN ADVENTURE IN MOTHERHOOD

By JOHN BECKNER BOUDE

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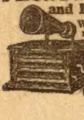

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"Fifty and Fifty"

By Florence Lillian Henderson

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"I AM GLAD of it!" spoke Harley Blake, and he looked as if in dead earnest and relieved.

He was seated before the cold and empty fireplace of his cheerless room. He made a faint glow of heat and warmth, however, by striking a match and igniting the letter he had just received and read. He dropped it to the hearth and watched it curl up into fragile sheets of black and then at a breath go crumbling into fragments.

"The last bridge burned," he mused, trying to smile half humorously, but the situation was too serious. "I have exhausted my friends and relatives. The former gave me profuse promises of influence and help and failed me. My father's own brother writes me a homily on independence and thrift, and would not even risk giving me a recommendation of capability and honesty. That letter is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. Good-by to the old life for good!"

But there Harley hesitated mentally. He was poor in pocket, thought and expectancy, but love is rich and he loved Helen Wendell. They had been more than friendly, but that was before she had gone away on a long trip to the Panama Canal with her scientific father—before Harley had tried to make his way in life in a practical way, and had failed.

He had not heard from her since. When poverty and lack of work had fastened their disheartening grip upon him, he had cut loose perforce from the social circle in which Miss Wendell moved. He had not even heard if she had returned.

Strikingly, however, he recalled a certain discussion he had held with Helen. It had verged upon love, but masked as friendship. She had voiced her sentiments that when two of the opposite sex were mutually drawn one to the other, it should lead to all sacrifice of weal and woe, but they should be true. "I would cling to a man to the last who, esteeming me, offered me the humblest life, if love, respect and real endeavor lay behind it all." "Some day, when I have become an expert harvest hand or a plodding miner, I may write to remind you of those words." Harley had spoken laughingly, and she, in earnest had said: "It may bring a response," and had smiled, too, but with a tender light in her eyes he loved to remember.

"A great uncle, that of mine!" many a time Harley had reflected, somewhat bitterly. "He insists on four years of a college agricultural course, and then tells me to follow medicine, or some other respectable profession. Why didn't he give me a farm?"

But now, cutting loose from all the past life, no prospects of work, no money in his pocket, Harley packed his best clothes in a suitcase, bade his landlady good-by and proceeded to the street. There was a grim uncompromising glitter in his eye as he proceeded to a second-hand clothing store. When he came out of it Harley was arrayed in a coarse common working suit and had a few dollars in cash as a result of a sale of his few belongings.

His next step was at a laborers' employment bureau. Its proprietor started at this white-handed, refined-faced, applicant, who indifferently announced that track work, mining, farm work, in fact, any line of manual employment, would be acceptable.

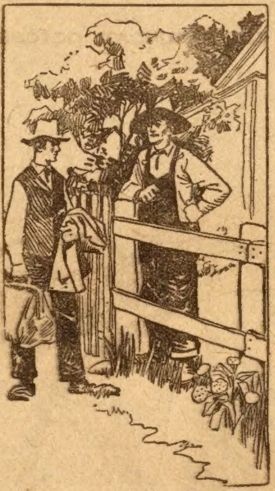
Harley was required to pay a fee of $2. Then he was given a card. It read, "Superintendent of Construction, Allegan, Iowa." He was handed a bit of pasteboard.

"That is a pass to your destination," advised the agency. "When you arrive there apply for grading work—$1.75 a day and board."

"That sounds tangible!" nodded Harley gratefully, and took his departure. "It's work," he communed with himself. It will keep me from becoming a pauper and—it will make me forget!"

But adverse fortune seemed to pursue the victim it had kept tramping the streets for several weeks looking for the position he never found.

He arrived at Allegan to find work at a standstill and the railroad in the hands of a receiver. Some 200 workmen had dispersed, or were dispersing, about the immediate vicinity. The farmers in the district were hilarious over this vast influx of labor, for they needed workers in the fields, and under the exigencies of the occasion were able to bargain at their own figure.


"I Might Give You Board and Lodging for a Week's Work."

Harley was quite glad of the new prospect opened. He preferred farm work. Then came a new disappointment. The railroad laborers had two days' start of him. The labor market was glutted. Every place at plow and harrow was filled.

"Oh, well, I shall have to strike out for a new field, that is all," he told himself grimly, trying to fancy he was imbued with the optimism of an enthusiastic ambition.

Harley tramped it, brave as a Trojan, for two days. On the morning of the third he met his first bit of encouragement. He had come upon a desolate, starved-looking farm and hailed its equally dismal owner watering lean, disconsolate cattle. The man himself was grim-faced and dispirited in mien and talk.

"I might give you board and lodging for a week's work," he said ungraciously.

"I'll take that, if it's only to get my hand in," agreed Harley cheerfully. "But say, what's struck the place?"

"A sucker!" growled the man, whose name was Evans. "The sucker is me. I lost my wife and wanted a lonely life. I've got it. Traded a nice village home for this—farm, they called it. Look at it!"

"It does look forlorn, for a fact," observed Harley, "but what's the main subject of discouragement. Ah, I see—the soil," scooping up a handful of the loose, yellow dirt, scanning it closely, tasting of it, smelling of it, and tossing it adrift with a thoughtful 'Humph! Got any loose capital?"

"What if I have?" demanded the farmer, surlily and with suspicion.

"Because, if you have, and will invest it in lime and phosphates, I'll make a cast-iron contract to do the rest that will make this place a Garden of Eden inside of two seasons on a basis of fifty and fifty."

"Uncle wasn't so bad, after all!" many a time later Harry soliloquized. He threw schooling, energy and soul into his first and grand chance at scientific farming. At the end of two years he had made a contented man of his employer and a proud, happy man of himself.

So proud and happy, in fact, that one day, notwithstanding the fact that he had put the past all behind him, in an idle, whimsical mood, he ventured writing a letter to Helen Wendell. He told her the simple story of his endeavors, he told her that a wayward impulse had led him to hope that she had not forgotten their old friendship and would be interested in knowing that a small but cheering measure of success had come to him.

He hoped for a reply, but none came in the form of a letter. A week went by, and one morning as he started for the well a farmer's rig drove up and Helen Wendell alighted.

She was in mourning, a little careworn, a little older, but the old true eyes looked as earnestly as of yore into the longing depths of his own, as he said:

"Is this the promised response of two years ago?"

"Am I welcome?" she asked simply.

His glowing lips, pressed to her willing own, answered.

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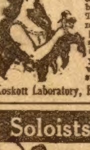

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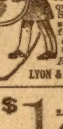

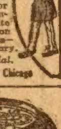

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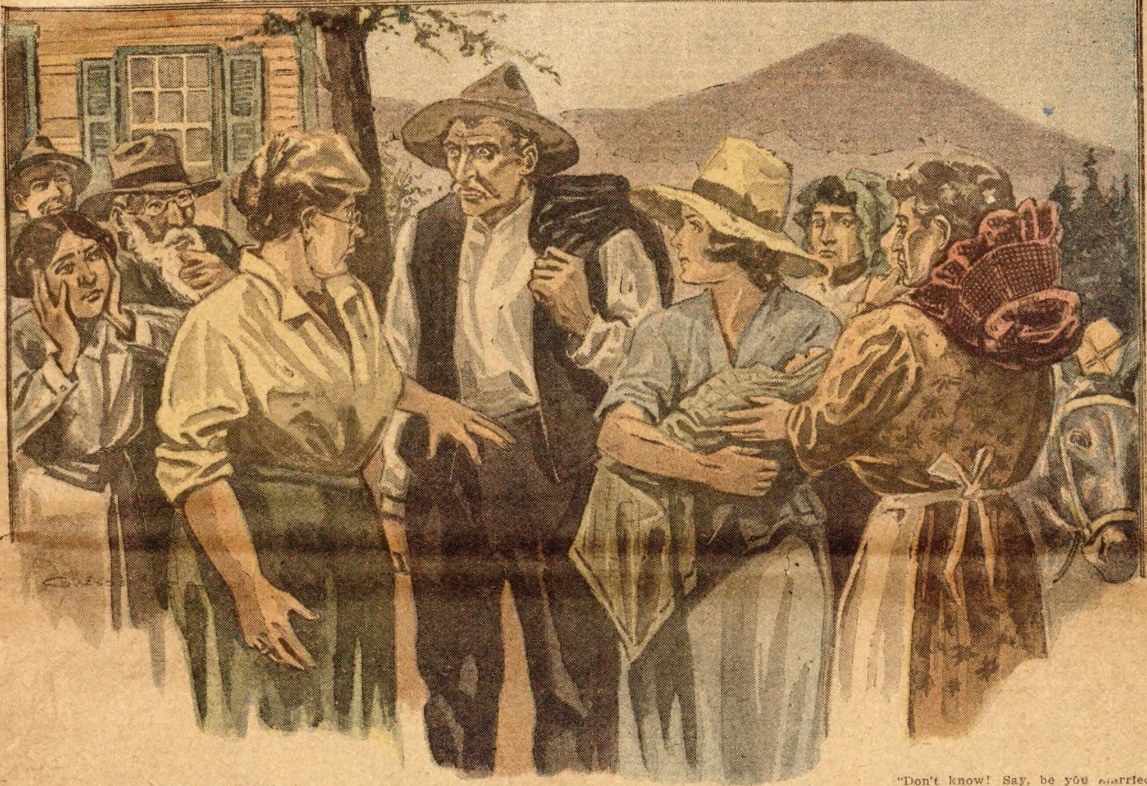

"You're a Nice Bunch of Females, You Are, to Let a Little Kid Suffer, Because You Don't Know Who His Daddy Is."

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CHAPTER I.

THE GIRL FINDS FRIENDS.

THE little town of Squaw Rock nestles on a narrow shelf of land with a green, pine-covered mountain at its back and the blue waters of Eel River at its feet. At least they were blue now, blue as the sky, altho but a few weeks gone and they were madly rushing, brown and angry, hiding the rocks and filling the channel to the brim. But now summer reigned, that season in the mountains of northern California so loved by campers and sportsmen, when no rain falls from June to September, when the grass on the high ranges is burned a delicate golden brown; when the ghostly, star-white blossoms of the dogwood take on a dusky, grayish hue and the branches of the sad madrone trees turn to a deeper wine color; when one perfect day follows another and the sun shines thru the high, rarified atmosphere in needle points of heat that makes the cool green shade of the great conifers a welcome haven of retreat.

One of these clear, hot days was drawing to a close; the sun had dropped behind the mountain and most of the inhabitants of the place were lined up on the postoffice platform waiting for the chief event of the day to take place, namely, the passing of the up train from the city.

Squaw Rock, which derives its name from a huge rock on the mountainside covered with Indian hieroglyphics, is a flag station on the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, and consists of a schoolhouse built of ordinary redwood "shakes," with the "Stars and Stripes" of its flagpole showing gayly against the green of the mountain behind, a few shacks of various size and description, a dilapidated frame house called by courtesy a hotel, the store and postoffice and a square box-like structure open on three sides and having a shed on the other, which served as both passenger and freight depot.

On this afternoon old Curliss was relating for the hundredth time in a droning voice muffled by the growth of "alfalfa" on his face his adventures down on the Navajo Reservation, when some one gave an exclamation and pointed to the rough mountain road which connected the village with the highway on the range above. Old Curliss' mouth dropped open and he stopped in the middle of a sentence as they all gazed at the spectacle that met their view.

Emerging from the screen of pines that hid the road from sight there came first an ancient mule with a pack on one side and a sugar box strapped to the other. Following the mule and tied to his pack saddle by a long rope came a weary-looking cow, and trudging by their side a yet more weary girl. Her face they could not see at that distance, only some locks of curly reddish hair falling below the brim of an old straw hat. Her body revealed a lithe and muscular strength in spite of all its drooping weariness. The charm of the face underneath that old straw hat they could not see; the dark-lashed violet eyes whose pupils changed and darkened at every passing thought, the clear skin burned to a golden peach-like hue with a few little freckles on the uptilted Irish nose. In another setting the face which seemed only meant for laughter would have attracted universal attention. Now her expression was charged with weariness and anxiety and when she spied the little concourse of people on the postoffice platform she flayed the lean mule to a greater speed with a long stick which she carried seemingly for that particular purpose.

When this odd little cavalcade came within speaking distance, what was the surprise of the people on the postoffice platform to see the girl go to the sugar box strapped to the mule's side and take therefrom a bundle which proved to be a baby! When she approached their surprise was further increased on seeing that its face was flushed and its eyes dull and vacant with fever.

The men were all interest; the women looked at her with suspicion as she stood there, a pathetic little figure in her worn old clothes and coarse mountain shoes, holding the baby in her arms. The fading light cast a soft glow over the tired face, while the mournful sighing of the pines from the dark wall of green at her back added a sorrowful note to the scene.

"He's sick; the baby's sick," she said, holding him out toward them. The words seemed forced from her lips, fatigue together with fear and anxiety making her almost inarticulate.

"Whose baby is it? Yourn?" asked the wife of the storekeeper, who was also the postmaster.

The girl nodded.

"Yourn, you say. Well, where's its daddy?"

"I—I don't know, I——"

"Don't know! Say, be you married?"

"No," answered the girl, and then realizing that she had made a mistake, she tried to rectify it by saying, "Well, that is, I——" but the words came haltingly, and indeed there was no need to say more. She was branded from that hour on. Mrs. Sappingfield, who had conducted this investigation, encompassed in her huge frame of two hundred pounds and more all the morality as well as social prominence of the town of Squaw Rock. In spite of her great weight she affected a lightness and daintiness of carriage, going about with mincing steps, waving her great arms in the air like some giant bird of prehistoric times. She now turned her broad back squarely upon this applicant for mercy with a significant look at the others.

The baby moaned and the girl, coming to a realizing sense of his great need, cried out: "See, he's sick—the baby's sick; won't some of you do something?" and into the tired blue eyes there came a beseeching look of terror.

But Mrs. Sappingfield's heart was harder than the nether mill stone.

"Well," and she forgot for a moment to put on her accustomed airiness of manner, but spoke with all the snake-venom of her low, mean soul, "I must say you got a pile o' nerve to expect respectable people to do anything for a brat like that!" and again she turned her ample person away from the girl's appealing face.

"Oh, won't somebody do something?" cried the girl in a despairing voice, "I'm afraid he's going to die!" Her anguish was pitiful to see, but the women were all dominated by Mrs. Sappingfield and the men were at a loss to know what to do.

At this juncture, fortunately for the baby, a roughly clad man of great bulk stepped into the circle surrounding the girl.

"Hell!" he cried, "you're a nice bunch of females, you are, to let a little kid suffer just because you don't know who his daddy is!" and he let forth a stream of profanity and sulphurous language that ought in truth to have melted Mrs. Sappingfield's mountain of flesh on the spot. Then turning to the girl he said, "Come along, Kid, my old woman will take care of you. She's got some sense, she has, if none of these birds hain't. Here," and he tossed some coins to the storekeeper, "take care of the mule and the cow and I'll tend to the rest!" He strode over to the forlorn creatures and tore the pack from the mule's back, then motioning to the girl to follow he started up the railroad track muttering curses as he went along. Profanity seems to be a necessary component of a cattle rancher's equipment; if he could not swear at his horses, dogs and cattle he just naturally would have to kill them sometimes.

Stumbling along in her weariness, with the baby clasped close in her arms, the girl followed, her heart throbbing with thankfulness for so powerful an ally. The Scarlet Letter branded on her breast by the Sappingfield virago burned her not at all; the only heat she was conscious of was that of the panting little body that she held so close to her heart. Utterly oblivious to the beauty of her surroundings she trudged painfully along in the wake of the rancher, while the silvery blue waters of the river at her right rippled far below around the massive bowlders which in aeons long past some vast cataclysm of Nature had thrown in its path, while far across the stream the huge bulk of Goat Peak, and farther on that of Yellow Jacket Butte, pine covered to their summits, cut the cloudless blue of the sky. But ever after, thruout her life, the sight of two steel rails along a stony bed or the scent of dogwood blooms brought back this hour with a sickening intensity.

She clambered down a steep incline to the water's edge, the rancher's house was on the other bank of the stream, got into the boat as he directed, every thought an unconscious prayer for speed. The short row across the stream seemed interminable, likewise the climb up the steps cut into the bank on the other side; it seemed to the girl that she only breathed again when she laid the feverish little form in the outstretched arms of the kind-faced rancher's wife.

The rancher had indeed spoken the truth when he said, "My old woman'll take care of you." Childless herself, her denied motherhood flowed forth in a steady stream to aid all those more fortunate than herself in the care of their offspring; countless nephews and nieces, real and otherwise, called her "Aunt Mary" and were never denied anything she had to give.

When they entered the house the rancher said: "Here, old woman, I've brought you a visitor. The kid's sick an' I told the little woman that you'd know what to do for it."

"Well, I guess I do if any one does," she answered, as she took the baby into her arms and looked at him closely. She was tall and angular with no pretense to beauty, but her face was as that of the Mother of God to the poor girl who stood before her, and when she said, "I don't think there's much the matter with him 'ceptin' a little attack of summer complaint," the reaction from her former anxiety was overwhelming. She could scarcely answer as the mountain woman continued in her kindly voice, "You been sleepin' out with him, ain't you? The nights is cold——"

"Yes," answered the girl in a low voice. "I—I had to—that is——" and she stopped confused.

"We'll soon have him all right again—ma's babies used to get sick like this real often in summer," she went on, taking no notice of the girl's confusion. Asking no embarrassing questions, she continued to examine the little fellow carefully, laying him across her lap to do so, then turning to her husband, who had been walking awkwardly about as men will in situations like this, she said: "Jim, fix up the fire so's I can heat some water. A little camomile tea'll help matters a good deal, I guess."

Relaxed from the strain she had been under and realizing that she might depend absolutely upon the capability and resourcefulness of this motherly woman, the girl's strength suddenly left her and she swayed where she stood. The rancher sprang to catch her and laid her down upon the lounge. Her face had gone white beneath its tan and her lips were blue.

"Looks as tho we might have two patients instead of one," said the rancher's wife. "Give her a little brandy, Jim. 'Pears like she was clean done out."

Thus revived, the girl confessed that she had eaten scarcely at all since the baby was taken ill. After a bountiful supper and after being reassured of the baby's welfare, she went to bed and had the first real refreshing slumber that she had known for many days.

After everything had been done for the night, and the baby, owing to the efficient care he had received, was sleeping naturally, Jim Barnes, the rancher, and his wife were sitting at the kitchen table talking over the strange circumstances of the girl's advent into their home.

"Nothing will ever make me believe that she's a bad girl," said Mrs. Barnes.

"Bad be d—d!" was her husband's emphatic rejoinder. "Just because that d—d old she-coyote called her bad don't make her so. Hell! Them old carrion crows would call any one bad if they didn't know their whole family history," and the places to which he condemned Mrs. Sappingfield and her kind are better imagined than told.

"Well, they's other things that make me think she ain't bad," said Mrs. Barnes calmly. Long acquaintance with her husband's sulphurous language had inured her to its effect. "I shouldn't be surprised if she wasn't the kid's mammy at all."

"Not his mammy? How do you make that out?"

"Well, I don't just know," said Mrs. Barnes, hesitatingly, "but she don't act like she's had much experience with babies—any one that had 'd known 'twas only a little summer complaint that ailed him. She thought he was goin' to die, an' then the idea of sleepin' out with such a young baby, an' they'd been doin' it quite a spell if I'm any judge; the baby's skin is as brown as a papoose's. They's something strange about it."

"Well," drawled the rancher, rising to his full height preparatory to retiring for the night, "it don't make no difference whether she's its mammy or not, or whether it's got a daddy or not. When I see them d—d old she-wolves over there turn her down I said to myself, 'It's up to you, Jim Barnes, to see her thru,' an' we're goin' to do it, too, Old Woman, hain't we?"

"Right you are, Old Man," was the hearty response. "We ain't no church members, like what Mrs. Sappingfield is, but we sure got enough decency for that."

And a few moments later she, too, rose, and after making sure of her visitor's comfort, went to bed.

CHAPTER II.

A GREAT LOVE COMES INTO MILLIE'S LIFE.

A FEW weeks previous to the events chronicled above, Millie Barnum was slowly climbing one of the steepest grades of the State highway at a point some forty miles north of the town of Squaw Rock. The warm, damp odor of growing vegetation permeated the air; the spring rains had but lately ceased, leaving the road still muddy and dangerous to travel with its steep ascents and abrupt curves.

Millie was just emerging from one of the great redwood forests and no one, unless he has seen them, can imagine the templed beauty of these dark red columnar trunks as they raise hundreds of feet without a vestige of foliage to mar their symmetry. The cool, green shade cast by the mass of verdure at their tops gives one of these forests, entirely free of underbrush as they are, the appearance of some vast pillared cathedral, with long green aisles seen dimly thru stained glass windows, and needs only the verberating tones of a great pipe organ to make the illusion complete. They have been called the "Twilight of the Gods," and aptly so for two reasons: It is always twilight beneath their canopied tops of ever living green, and these mighty gods of the forest rearing their massive red trunks upward to the sky, their bases mantled with sword fern and pink rododhendron blooms, are indeed in the twilight of their lives if the hands of their two great enemies, fire and the greed of man, be not stayed.

To Millie's young, untutored soul, living all her youth as she had done in close proximity to them, they had imparted something of their mystery, and of their grim majesty, attained thru watching the countless tragedies of the forest for night onto a thousand years. Had she but known it she was even then walking on the very heels of one of these tragedies, but all her thoughts were occupied with the sorrow of her own young life. She had but a few days before accompanied to its last resting place the body of a younger brother whom she had vainly tried to rescue from that grim destroyer of youth, the Great White Plague!

Inheriting the pre-disposition to the disease from his mother, who had died when he was a baby, Harold Barnum was always exceedingly delicate. Millie was the only mother he had ever known. To make matters worse, their father was one of those criminally irresponsible beings whose only mission in life seems to be to bring forth offspring only to cast them upon the mercies of an indifferent public. To illustrate: The cheap wooden house that he owned had never been fumigated or re-papered since his wife's death. Dirty, ragged strips of paper, disease-breeding and germ-harboring, hung from the walls and ceiling. Millie never remembered the house in any other condition. She had done her little best, after her mother had slipped away, to keep things going, but it had been a heart breaking task.

When in early youth the disease fastened itself upon the boy and she saw him slipping away from her as her mother had done, saw him struggling and coughing under tasks he never should have undertaken because no one knew or cared, and because he was brave and would not be a "quitter," Millie's heart died within her. At last because some kindly, careless soul had said, "You ought to take him into the mountains, that would cure him——" she had earned, borrowed, begged and all but stolen money enough to bring him up here among the pines and redwoods where they had lived alone in a little shack made of redwood "shakes." Milk and eggs the boy must have, so she had bought a cow and some chickens. These with the sturdy little mule, "Jack," upon whose back they had "packed in" their few belongings, constituted the family.

At first Harold had seemed to thrive, but the disease had gone too far, and so the brave young life slowly faded away, and one morning Millie awoke to find herself alone in the shack, alone except for a long still form lying on the cot that had been placed out on the porch for more air. The sight of that form, so slight as to be almost transparent, the face so young yet showing the marks of the gallant fight the boy had made, filled Millie with a grief and desolation so overwhelming that today after it was all over, and the boy had been laid away, she was still numb and dazed with misery. He had been so hopeful, so cheerful up to the very last—why, oh why?—this was the burden of her cry as she trudged along the steep hillside road on her way back to the little shack to make a final disposal of the live stock and the few household effects that they had had with them in the mountains.

A friendly auto brought her to a fork in the road about a mile back. Her way now lay over one of the stiffest grades in the whole length of the highway. It had been moderated somewhat to accommodate the tide of summer travel, but it was still very steep. On Millie's right the mountain rose almost perpendicularly and on her left the descent was even more abrupt; she never liked to look over the edge at this point because between the very tips of the huge pines that had their roots in the soil far beneath she could see great jagged boulders, and farther yet flashes of the Van Deusen River, which is here a rushing mountain torrent swirling around the rocks that impede its course. It was a wildly beautiful place, but it never held any charm for Millie; she had heard too many tales of accidents to travelers at this dangerous place to have an eye for its beauty. Her sad thoughts, too, so encompassed her that she was conscious of little else as she slowly followed the curves in the steep road.

Soon, however, she became aware of a faint moaning cry sounding above the muffled roar of the river; she became suddenly alert as she realized she had been hearing it sub-consciously for several moments before her brain had registered the fact that it was a cry of some one or something in distress.

She stopped. Yes, there it was again, a faint moan and then a whimpering cry. "Why," she said aloud, "it sounds like a baby!"

Babies were Millie's delight. She was all mother, and her long care of Harold had developed this part of her nature, so that now she was all alert. "A baby! It can't be a baby alone in such a place as this!"

Every faculty she possessed was aroused and she ran on, stopping to listen at every step. "Oh God," she whispered, as she ran, led by the sound, to the left side of the road with the river rushing far below, "it's down there! Oh, what can it be?" She stopped and listened again, her ears keenly alive now to every whisper. She peered thru the green gloom down the mountainside. There! A gleam of white in the top of a bush, and again the pitiful cry!

'Twas well indeed that Millie was mountain bred, because the task before her was stupendous. Carefully she clambered down, one step at a time, and taking advantage of every root and stout shrub lest she slip and be landed among the jagged rocks below. The sound became clearer as she slowly made her way down the mountainside ever keeping her eyes on that spot of white in the dark green bush.

At last she reached it and what was her unbounded surprise to have her suspicions verified by finding a real, live baby six or seven months old, caught and securely held by the tough branches of a manzanita bush. It was a miracle beyond Millie's comprehension. Shudderingly she looked below, expecting to see a maimed and sorry spectacle. But her eyes could discern nothing thru the gloom and dense foliage. She could not give any time to the search because all her thoughts were concentrated on the child; its lips were blue and the little cry came more and more feebly. Millie extracted it from the bush and clasped it to her breast in an effort to warm the cold little hands and face. Her coming was providential, as it was very evident that soon the pitiful cry would have been stilled forever. Pedestrians might not pass that way for days together and the noise of any kind of vehicle would have entirely drowned the weak voice.

Before beginning the ascent back to the road Millie looked hastily around again for some clew to the strange mystery, but aside from the fact that the soil was loosened as tho some heavy body had fallen there she could see nothing. She was about to proceed up the bank when her eyes fell upon a small black object lodged against a tree a few feet farther down. With difficulty she reached it and found it to be a leather hand bag of peculiar pattern. As she reached to secure it what was her joy to see also, imbedded in the moss, empty but intact, an infant's nursing bottle. Securing both objects, she made her way as quickly as possible back to the road again, giving but one fearful look down to where the river raged and tumbled over jagged rocks and bowlders.

She hastened over the road as she had never done before, realizing that if she would save the little creature's life it must have sustenance soon. Fortunately the distance to her shack was not great and she soon encompassed it, anxiety giving her wings. She laid the baby tenderly down on the bed, set milk which she found still fresh in the cooler on the shady side of the shack, to warm on the little oil stove, and by means of warm blankets and the hot water bottle strove to put some life into the limp little body. Poor Millie was past mistress in the art of caring for the sick. She succeeded in getting a small portion of the milk, into which she had put a few drops of brandy, between the blue lips and was soon rewarded by a faint movement of the lips and a more natural color in the wan, pinched face. It was still very weak and Millie could see that constant effort would be required to keep the spark of life alive.

At intervals during the day while she administered to the child she reviewed the situation. What could she do? The shack was in a lonely place away from the road: she could not leave the baby to summon help; to take him anywhere in his present condition was out of the question, so there was nothing to do but to depend upon her own efforts. The baby required constant care the night thru. He had received no outward injury—there was not a bruise nor a scratch on his whole body, and no hanging of limp, broken limbs; Millie had ascertained this when she rescued him. It was as tho he had dropped from the skies into the friendly manzanita bush, whose tough branches held him securely in their grasp. Still he tossed all night in the restlessness of extreme fatigue, giving at intervals his fretful cry.

Toward morning Millie was overjoyed to see that he had at last fallen into a more natural slumber, and relaxed from anxiety, she lay down beside him and immediately fell asleep also. She was awakened by a sound strange in her ears, and it was a moment or two before she realized that it was made by the baby, lying at her side, crowing and laughing at a broad band of sunlight that was playing across the low ceiling of the shack.

"Oh, you blessed, you darling!" cried Millie in a transport of relief and inborn mother love, as she drew the little thing to her starved and hungry heart.

He was a beautiful boy with big brown eyes and dark curling hair. He seemed not to have the slightest fear of Millie; his long night of suffering in which she had played the part of ministering angel seemed to have obliterated all other memories from his baby soul and he clung to Millie as tho he were her very own. This only increased the rapture of possession that had sprung up in her heart. A daring thought seized her. Why not? She had found him, he would have died in a few moments more, and in that instant Millie became a "pirate bold," out-Kidding the great Captain himself in the craftiness with which she laid her plans, but differing from him in that her loot was not yellow Spanish gold, but a little bit of human flotsam and jetsam picked off from the mountain-side in a California forest!

Looking at the little fellow as he lay so contentedly across her arm, she was again overwhelmed by the mystery of it all. There was not a distinguishing mark upon him. His little body was perfect, not a spot or blemish, and his clothes tho fine and beautiful disclosed not a clew. Then her eyes fell upon the hand bag. Perhaps the clew lay there. Should she open it and see? No, by all means, no, and she seized the unoffending article and thrust it back into the farthest recesses of the packing box dresser that adorned one side of the room.

This done, she felt better and went about her various morning tasks with a lightened heart, the memories of the last sad weeks lost in bright anticipation of the future. She cared for the baby, prepared herself some breakfast, milked the cow and fed the mule and chickens. Yet, underneath it all, her soul was in a tumult. There must have been some kind of an accident. In no other way could it have been possible for the baby to be in the place in which she had found him. Inquiries were bound to be made. Never had she been so thankful that her little shack was so far from the main traveled road, and yet she knew that she was not entirely safe, even here.

As the morning wore on a plan outlined itself in her mind. It was certain that the baby would take a nap. The store where she purchased her provisions was not more than a mile or so back at the fork in the road; she would fix the baby securely in the bed and while he slept would hasten as swiftly as she could to the store, her ostensible purpose being the purchase of a few groceries. She would surely learn there the nature of the accident if there had been one.

With fear and trembling she entered the store and asked for her few provisions. There were no other customers about, and altho the proprietor was a talkative man Millie had never had much conversation with him, and now she scarcely knew how to broach the subject without divulging the fact of a previous knowledge of what she was certain must have happened. So she lingered, looking at first one thing and then another, hoping that some one else would come in.

In a short time her wish was granted. A lumberman from one of the big redwood camps entered and said: "Well, Jake, you hain't heard nothing more, have ye?"

"Waal, not much more," drawled Jake.

Millie's knees nearly doubled under her and she was obliged to sit down on a packing case near the counter. She knew what was coming.

Jake continued: "The feller what owned the car was up here from Footville an' identified the driver, but so far they hain't a word come about the other man and the woman."

"That so?" was the reply. "Queer, hain't it, that there wasn't nothin' to identify 'em?"

Millie could stand no more. Rising and trying to keep her voice steady she said: "What is it? Was some one hurt?"

Jake looked at her in mild astonishment. "Why, hain't you heard nothin'? Thought every one that lived anywheres around here had heard about it?"

"Well," Millie hesitated, "I been livin' off up there in the shack an' then you know I—I've just been down to the valley to——"

"Yes, I know," interrupted Jake sympathizingly. "Waal," he continued in a drawling voice, "an auto went over the Taylor grade—we think it must have been in the night, night afore last, or mebby early yistiddy mornin'. We calkilate they didn't have no chains on an' its bein' slippery after the rains—we s'pose the brakes must have give out or somethin'—we jest have to guess at everything because, wall they was all killed deader'n door nails——"

"Oh!" Millie could not repress a cry of horror.

"Yep," continued Jake, rather enjoying the sensation he was making, "some fishermen found the auto yistiddy afternoon upside down between two rocks. The chauffeur was thrown out an' his head was cut open an' the others was under the car, an' them that found 'em said they guessed they never moved after they struck the rocks. The auto must have jest about turned a somersault an——"

"How many?" asked Millie with stiffened lips and a white face.

"Jest a man an' a woman, an' the curus part of it is that there wa'ant a thing to identify 'em, no letters nor cards nor nothin'. We hunted everywhere, yistiddy afternoon—found where the car skidded over the grade, struck one place a little furder daown—from there she must have made a clean jump to the bottom—but we didn't find nothin' 't all."

"When—when—did you say you looked on the bank?" Millie found herself choking over the words.

"Why, yistiddy, yistiddy afternoon, but it was in the night afore or early in the mornin' when it happened," laboriously explained Jake, looking at Millie in mild surprise at her apparent denseness. He could not know Millie's thoughts, did not know that she was thinking of the catastrophe it would have been if some one else had found the baby before she came along. The unspeakable joy that filled her soul only goes to show how far she had gone in her determination to keep the baby at all costs.

"But wasn't there——" and Millie could scarcely articulate the words, "nothing, no baggage—or nothing to——?"

"No," interrupted Jake, "there wa'ant nothin' but a little money in the man's pocket. The woman didn't have nothin' 't all, not even a hand bag."

Neither saw Millie's start at this, but the lumberman who had been an interested listener broke in. "Why, Jake, I heerd they was a suitcase——"

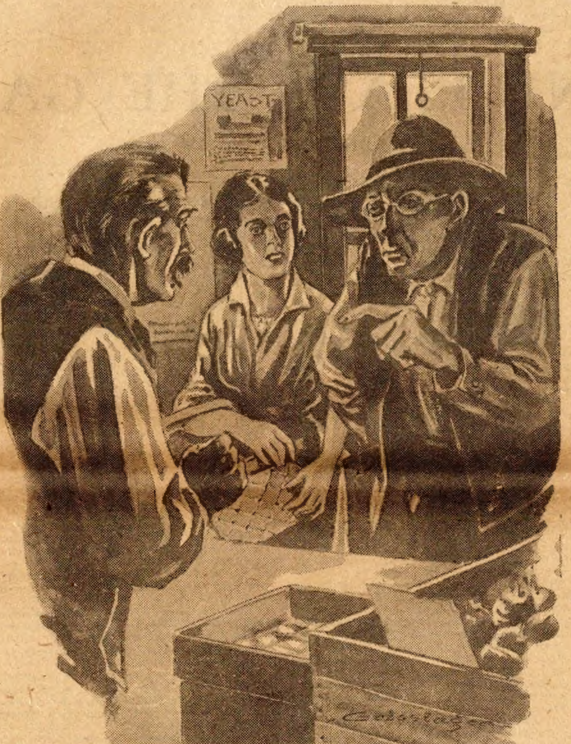
"Oh, yes," said Jake, "they was a suitcase, but it didn't tell nothin'. It was filled with kid's fixin's, dresses an' things fer a baby. Seems queer when they wasn't no kid. Looked everywhere, but couldn't find nothin'. Course," and Jake almost visibly rolled his tongue over this sweet morsel of grewsome conjecture, "it might have been thrown furder into the river an' drowned an' its body got crowded into one of them deep holes. You can't tell, anything might have happened, bein' thrown from sech a hight. They wasn't much to go by in the others. They was so smashed up that their best friends wouldn't know 'em. Some thought they must have been jest carryin' the suit case for some one else."

Millie had clung to the rude counter with whitened knuckles during this recital and now, hastily gathering up her parcels, she went toward the door. The men were so engrossed with their subject that they did not notice her going, and she scarcely knew herself how she got out of the store.

When she came to a full realization of her senses she was running breathlessly along the road to the shack sobbing to herself, "Oh, it was his mammy, poor little kid, poor little motherless kid! He's mine now, more than ever, all mine; no one to take him from me now. I was feelin' bad for his mother an' father, but they're dead, and now, Oh God!" she panted in a sort of inarticulate prayer, "he's mine; oh, let me keep him; oh——"

She would not look over the bank as she passed the "Taylor grade;" horror shook her limbs and paled her face as she hurried by as swiftly as she could. What if some one had come to the shack in her absence and taken the baby! Her feet seemed weighted with lead and not to do her bidding, but at last with fumbling hands she was unlocking the door, and she almost fell with a shock of joy as she heard a little cooing sound thru the bedroom door.

She rushed in fell on her knees beside the bed. "Oh, you darling, you bird! You little honey boy; you're mine, all mine," she panted as she drew him into her arms, showering kisses and foolish love words upon him as women will. He responded by reaching his little hands up to her face, and Millie almost swooned with the transport of joy that overwhelmed her at the thought of her undisputed possession of the child. Thus Millie came into the heritage of motherhood inherent in every normal female soul. That she achieved it thus vicariously troubled her not at all. Had the baby been her own flesh she could not have given him a love more all-absorbing than that which she showered upon him from her desolate, hungry heart.



"Yep," Continued Jake, Rather Enjoying the Sensation He Was Making, "Some Fishermen Found the Auto Yistiddy Afternoon, Upside Down."

As to the future, to remain in the shack was unthinkable. It was too near the scene of the accident; inquiries were bound to be made. Two people could not be so utterly friendless as to disappear off the face of the earth and leave absolutely no clew to follow. Some one was bound to appear sooner or later, and when that happened Millie was determined to be far away from the place. As long as his parents were dead, she argued, no one had a better right to the baby than she.

Her preparations were simple in the extreme. The long rainless summer of these northern regions had set in, and to live "in the open" was second nature to mountain-bred Millie. The cow she must take for the baby's sake, likewise the mule on which to "pack" their few belongings, and to carry the baby, too, when necessary. The few remaining hens could be turned out to fend for themselves; upon all else she knew she could turn the key of the shack and find it unmolested on her return, whenever that might be.

Of her father back in the little village she took no thought. He never had loomed large on her horizon, and now in comparison with her new found treasure he dwindled to a mere speck too small to be considered. If he thought about her at all he would conclude that, when she did not return, she had gone to her relatives back in the mountains. So after one more errand to the store for necessary provisions, Millie embarked on the Great Adventure.

CHAPTER III.

MILLIE FINDS FRIENDS.

AND it was an adventure indeed for both Millie and the baby. At first the only thought of the former was to put as great a distance as possible between themselves and the scene of the accident. Roads are few in this mountainous country and it was necessary to travel the main highway, but Millie arranged it so that they kept well out of sight of all other wayfarers for the first few miles, traveling often at night with the baby tucked snugly in the sugar box and sound asleep. A strange little cavalcade they must have looked, walking along by the bright light of the moon shining down thru the branches of the tall bull pines that lined the road, with the mournful howl of the coyotes for their only company.

But how they did enjoy the long sunshiny days encamped in some sheltered spot, breathing in long draughts of the invigorating balsam scented air! And the nights, sleeping on a pine bough bed which Millie was an adept at making! It had been one long holiday for mountain-bred Millie, and the baby had thrived wonderfully until this sudden illness came upon him. This catastrophe, entirely uncounted on by Millie, was doubtless caused by the hot days and cold nights of the higher altitudes. After this her one desire was to find some one to aid her in her difficulty, and thus it was we found her on the mountain trail leading into the little town of Squaw Rock.

In her recital of her trip across the mountains, the next morning after her arrival in the home of the rancher, she told nothing of her former existence nor the manner of the baby's coming into her life, preferring to suffer all the shame of an unwedded motherhood than to run the risk of losing her treasure.

His mother was dead she argued; no one could take as good care of him as she; he was hers and she would give no one the chance to take him from her.

In a few days, under the skillful care of Mrs. Barnes, the baby was soon his laughing, crowing self once more, and he so endeared himself to the hearts of the rancher and his wife that they became almost as fond of him as Millie herself.

Neither questioned Millie as to her past. They accepted what she chose to tell them, their judgment of her being founded on what she was and not on anything that her past life might contain. This is a result of life in the mountains, among the big scenes of nature. They breed a contempt for the littleness and meanness of life. One rule is invariably followed. A visitor is always welcome to what you have and no questions asked, as long as he remains "white;" when he turns "yellow" out he goes, and that in double-quick time.

They could see that Millie had had some great sorrow and they respected her for it. As for Jim, she was a woman and needed help. That was enough for the chivalry inborn in strong natures like his; whether the child was hers in wedlock or out of it made no difference to him. As to his wife, she often sniffed inwardly to herself at the thought of Millie's reception by the "Squaw Rockers," as she called them. "Huh! a pretty haw-de-do for the likes of them to turn up their noses at her. Guess none of their pasts would bear lookin' into. Them that holler the most are usually the worst themselves."

The home that Millie had thus found was indeed a comfortable one. Mrs. Barnes, tho mountain born and bred, had spent the first years of her married life in town, and when she consented to come to this ranch her husband had a new home built for her with all the modern conveniences. Situated on a sightly spot on the river bank, the water from an ice cold mountain spring some distance up the hillside was piped all thru the house and garden. The building itself, instead of being constructed of the usual redwood "shakes," was built in bungalow style. This and the wonderful riot of flowers in the garden, the rose-covered trellises, and the brilliant sunshine of this sheltered spot made it seem as tho a little bit of Southern California itself had been taken up bodily and planted here. To live in its spotless comfort was a new experience for sad, wornout Millie and one that she dearly prized.

As the days went on, however, she grew uneasy; by not the slightest word or look was she made to feel that she was the least unwelcome, but her nature was too fine and big to go on continually eating the bread of charity. Her one thought on leaving the vicinity of her home and the spot where the accident had taken place was to go far enough away to be out of danger of pursuit, and then to obtain some work for her own support and that of the child. A note sent to her father at the beginning of her pilgrimage, giving him to understand that she had gone to the home relatives in the mountains would stop all inquiry on his part. He never had taken any thought concerning her welfare and would not now.

So one day Millie broached the subject to the rancher and his wife and asked them if they knew of any place for her.

"Hell!" said Jim in his usual emphatic manner. "There hain't no need for you to look for work. Stay here with me an' the old woman. We'd sure hate to see the youngster go——" He was at that minute having a good time tossing the little fellow in the air and catching him. The baby's shouts of laughter echoed all thru the place.

"You're awful good," answered Millie, "but I can't sponge on you all the time. Mis' Barnes don't need any one to help her an—I—the baby needs clothes—hain't there any one around here that wants work done? I—I don't care what it is. I'd do anything to stay near you."

"Well," said Mrs. Barnes, "I sure do hate to see you go, too, but I know how you feel—I'd feel the same in your place. There's Mrs. Beasley over to Fort Stewart. She takes boarders in summer an' always has a girl to help her, when she can get one. I guess you could go there, but you know you're welcome to stay here as long as you like," and no one looking into her kindly face as she made this statement could have doubted her sincerity.

"Oh, you're so good, Mis' Barnes," cried Millie. "I ain't use to havin' any one look out for me—I always had to look out for myself and——" she stopped confused, realizing suddenly that her hearers were unacquainted with the tragedy of her life.

"Yes, I know," said Mrs. Barnes, with quick sympathy and Millie knew that she referred to the baby whose advent into her life she had for the moment forgotten. A dark flush arose in her face and an impulse came to her to cry out to these dear people that she was not the degraded thing that they could not help thinking she was, but the impulse died. Fear killed it, fear of losing her treasure, the only thing that made life worth living.

"Yes," she said with a sigh, "there's the baby. It will be hard. Maybe she'll be like Mrs. Sappingfield," and Millie's purple-blue eyes changed and darkened, the pupils widening to their fullest extent as she hung on Mrs. Barnes' answer.

"No, she ain't like her," said Mrs. Barnes.

"Good God, no!" rumbled Jim, "Mis'

Beasley's white, she is, an' if the old woman goes along with you to—to—well, sort o' explain matters, you know——" and poor Jim stumbled, "it'll be all right. D—n it! It's got to be, that's all!"

"Hadn't we better see her right away?" suggested Millie timidly. "She might get some one else."

"Not much danger," said Mrs. Barnes, "but if you are set on gettin' work that's the most likely place. The fishermen have begun to come already an' later in the summer she'll have more boarders, deer hunters an' the like. I suppose we could go down to Fort Stewart tomorrow morning an' come back in the evenin'—Jim, do you think you could take care of the baby that long?"

"Sure thing!" said Jim heartily as he extracted the baby's hands from his hair which he was delightedly pulling, "the little devil thinks more of me now than any one else."

"Hadn't we better take him along?" said Millie, fear clutching at her heart at the thought of even so short a separation. "I got to have him there with me an' she might as well know——" Oh, it was hard indeed to appear guilty; all Millie's truthful nature cried out against it, and again the painful flush mounted to her forehead where the skin showed white underneath the curly rings of hair.

"I—I don't think so," said Mrs. Barnes pitying the girl's confusion. This subject had never once been broached between them until this hour and it was hard for both. "You can tell her, or I can, but you'll have to work, I can tell you," she added quickly, relieved to be off dangerous ground.

"Work won't hurt me none. I'm used to that," was the reply. Looking at the girl, Mrs. Barnes wondered much; so young, yet a so-called sinner, with her sweet childish face and speaking eyes in which lay the shadow of some great sorrow bravely borne, but she said nothing.

It took all the fortitude Millie possesed the next morning to part with the baby, he had been such an intimate part of her life the past weeks. He lay contentedly laughing and crowing in the little nest they had made for him with blankets and quilts in the bow of the boat as they rowed across the river. When the other bank was reached Jim rowed back with him while she and Mrs. Barnes ascended the steep bank to the railroad track and traversed the same path to Squaw Rock that Millie so full of fear and intolerable anxiety had followed in Jim's wake a short time before.

They found Mrs. Beasley, a kind motherly soul, but worked to death by a sudden influx of hunters and fishermen, and, as Mrs. Barnes had predicted, she was only too glad to hire Millie, making no objection to the baby provided she did not let him interfere with her work. Thus was the matter arranged and Millie was launched upon another stage of the "Great Adventure."

And she was successful here, as before, in making friends. Indeed it seemed as tho her charm was irresistible when she chose to exercise it, which she invariably did on the slightest encouragement. The loneliness and isolation of her former life, cursed as she had been by having a creature like Tom Barnum for a father, had been so great that now in this new environment where, in spite of her supposed misfortune, people were disposed to treat her kindly, she responded with all the native spontaneity in her young, sweet soul.

In a few days' time she became invaluable to Mrs. Beasley. Ensconced in a little room off the kitchen, usually used as a storeroom, but now given over to herself and the baby, she easily arranged her work so that the child was not the least trouble. Her capability and resourcefulness as far as all kinds of housework was concerned was a source of wonder to Mrs. Beasley. The rapidity and skill with which she was able to turn off the work seemed marvelous to the overworked woman, and in a week or two she wondered how she ever managed without her.

Jim Barnes disposed of the mule and the cow for Millie at a good figure, and after all her modest wants and those of the baby had been supplied she still had a neat little sum for a nest egg to start a fund against the time when she would again be obliged to look for work. But Millie did not worry about the future. Her early training, or rather the lack of it, had given her this advantage at least. She was well and could work, the baby was well and her very own, nothing else mattered, and so she literally bloomed like the sweet little Irish rose that nature intended her to be. The boarders all succumbed to her charm. They consisted for the most part of professional men, doctors, lawyers and dentists from Eureka, the nearest large town, with occasionally a party from Sacramento or San Francisco on their way by auto to the cities of the North.

Somtimes, as the long sunny days followed one another, days of toil interspersed by happy hours spent in the open air with the baby, who grew and thrived wonderfully, Millie almost feared that she was too happy, and alas, perhaps she was.

Millie's love for the baby grows until it well-nigh becomes a frenzy. Yet, in the midst of her happiness, there looms a black cloud. Buddie's mother comes on the scene, and Millie fights the great fight with herself and her sense of honor. How she finally wins this battle and secures happiness for herself and the mother of the baby is told in the second and last installment.

JANE PLAYS THE GAME

By Thorne Ryeau Wing

Jane was a little hoyden, but beneath her rough and tumble exterior there was a heart of pure gold and tender feelings, which only Hal brought to light.

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LITTLE Jane Rothwell was old enough, everybody knew, for she never made a secret of her twenty-four years; she had been to college, where she managed to get thru well enough; she had gone a good many places, and had met a good many people who liked her exceedingly well; but that very trait that made her a favorite of the grocer, and the village doctor, and of all the little boys in the neighborhood, came near postponing indefinitely her prospects of matrimony.

She had optimism—not merely the kind that saw incognito noblemen in the persons of tramps who occasionally dodged the town marshal in her little mid-Western village; nor that proudly brought in mangy stray curs to show her mother's callers; but an aggravated and malignant optimism that ran, when her feelings were touched, to athletics, unorganized, solitary and surprising. At ten this bent had won for her the yellow tag of tomboy; at sixteen, a reputation for limitless pep; at college, mention for proficiency in physical training. Of an advanced state, more anon.

In common with all wholesome young people of the feminine persuasion, Jane had been more or less in love for several years. She was aware of no acute symptoms herself, and no one, except perhaps her lively and loving small family, had an inkling. People seldom suspect these comrady girls of such things, tho they are often struck hardest of all. But it had been growing upon her as she sat during long discourses in the college chapel, with plenty of time to think, that good old Hal's semi-occasional letters, scribbled from poky lecture rooms at the State university, were, in spite of general brevity and frequent slips in spelling, the most cheerful messages anybody ever had found at the postoffice. All of the prize men far outshine their letters, anyway. Jane read the clever, extended communications from shallower youths, and enjoyed them hugely, often reading extracts to her roommate; but she kept Hal's letters. They were cached inconspicuously in a pair of ex-water-wings in her stout, shiny trunk. Girls will understand the subtle difference, even tho they may tie theirs up with ribbons and keep them in a scented drawer that locks.

When Jane came home after her graduation, they saw that she had failed to perform the duty that her former companions had done long before, that of growing up. Her daddy and her sweet little mother rejoiced. The neighbors' youngsters, with their lengthening legs and changing voices, were relieved beyond telling, and everybody forgot that she had left the 'teens behind. In peace, she raised her little war garden, started a family of spotted rabbits to furnish birthday gifts to her friends, adopted a French orphan at long distance, and sometimes wondered about Hal when she sat or walked alone.

Only one little postcard had come to join the packet in the water-wings in the past year. It stated that Hal was in Texas, learning to fly for Uncle Sam. That he was having enough to keep him busy. That Jane must be good to herself and not break her neck. But the card's date was unsatisfactorily ancient.

The neck his solicitude mentioned had stretched vainly many a time toward the mail the postman threw in at the door. She drew no message by sending a plump, jolly answer to the meager card. True to her instincts, she established a special class in gymnastics suspiciously near the hour when the mail carrier was accustomed to appear.

She learned to "skin the cat" over a low limb of the apple tree on her birthday after she had read the greetings from her former roommate and had inspected a yellow and pink boudoir cap crocheted and sent by her Aunt Ida Scoville.

Hardly a week passed that Jane did not go to see Hal's mother, who had a vine-covered house on the other side of the village. Sometimes she carried flowers from her garden; sometimes took a couple of little rabbits to show her, and in return Mrs. Horton read the newest letter from her son.

"How is Jane?" each letter asked uniformly. "Tell her I would like to see her war garden. Will write to her some day when I get a chance." And each time, comforted, Jane watched with renewed interest for the mail, and subsequently hung and swung on things with redoubled energy.

"You don't bother your head much about the boys, do you, Jane?" wheezed old Grandma Meacham approvingly from next door.

"There aren't any around here to bother about in war times," she laughed, and soon had the Meacham cat jumping thru her arms as she knelt in the grass, and an admiring cluster of children watching the performance.

It was at supper time one evening that the Rothwell family fell to talking of the long-absent Hal, who had, since the knee-trouser period, been a frequent visitor.

"I thought you used to hear from him quite often when you were both in college," Mr. Rothwell commented.

"Guess he has more to do now than he did then. I haven't heard a word for—oh, quite a while," Jane answered without visible emotion.

"Probably he has a girl that keeps him busy," hazarded Jane's sister Cornelia. She was of undergraduate age, very pretty and bright, but she had an unfortunate habit of rubbing one's fur in the wrong direction. "Lulu Storrey says everybody down there in Texas is crazy about him. She has been visiting near Hal's camp, and now she's visiting the Needham girls."

An odd feeling came to Jane, but she shook it off. She had not harbored petty jealousies in all her life.

"Lulu Storrey, a nice name! I don't believe I've ever seen her."

"Probably not. She and her mother came to Needham's yesterday. Cousins or something, you know. She'll be with your old crowd a good deal. I imagine they'll have to entertain for her." Cornelia prided herself upon strong first impressions. "She's very handsome, but not by any means of a high, intellectual type. Has big, rolling black eyes, and moons around a lot." Cornelia caught a ghost of a grin on Jane's face and flashed more naturally, "Just let her get her hooks on a man, and——"

"Cornelia!" Mrs. Rothwell's shocked protest and the telephone bell silenced her description just as it promised to be spicy.

"I'll answer," Jane volunteered hastily, jumping up with her mouth full.

"Hullo!" she chirped cheerfully, chewing fast to make good use of the time. "Yes, I'm Jane. Oh, yes!" A small brown hand extracted a generous bite of beefsteak and laid it on the telephone table. Fully itself now, her voice went on in a tone of decided respect. "Yes, and I'm glad to hear you, too, Mrs. Horton. Are you real happy? You sound just that way! . . . Oh! Honestly? . . . Isn't that wonderful! . . . Tonight? . . . We all shall. You tell him to be sure to come over to see us, won't you? . . . All right, you lucky little lady. . . . Good-by!"

There had been silence in the adjoining room, but it flew out the window when it saw Jane coming.

"Daddy! Mother! What do you think? Hal is coming home tonight to stay two or three days on his way East. Mother Hal is tickled nearly to death, bless her old heart. I told her to send him over to see us for sure. Oh! aren't you glad?"

"That's fine, fine!" Mr Rothwell ejaculated, wiping his generous mouth with a big napkin and looking with pleasant eyes at Jane's smiling mother. Cornelia soon ceased to join in the general rejoicing, and her Hawkshaw instinct showed in the corners of her mouth and narrowing eyes.

"I think it looks funny that he follows that Storrey girl right up. Of course, he may not know that she is here."

Jane's back stiffened and a merry smile came out on her face.

"Look here, little sister," she rallied. "When you've been eating with your knife as long as I have, you'll be thankful for what happens and not worry about why it happens."

Cornelia's antagonism was aroused. "I suppose you'd still be thankful if a visiting delegation would carry off Hal by main force. They're that kind, too—haven't any home address—just sponge around!"

Jane started, evidently at some great electric sensation received via her feet.

"Why, poor old Charley," she sympathized. "He hasn't had his supper yet!" and dragging a scrubby Airedale from under the table she hauled him, in spite of his scraping claws on the polished floor, out of the room, thru the kitchen and down the back steps.

"Who's carried off our old Hal yet, anyway, Charley?" she whispered into the hairy ear. The dog jumped up against her understandingly. She winked solemnly into Charley's adoring eyes. "Maybe we will, eh?" A sharp bark and much wagging.

"Bow-wow, Charley, bow-wow-wow, I tell you!" Charles capered about, looking up at her face.

"Well," Cornelia was saying in the dining-room, "if sister would act like a grown-up person, and be sensible, maybe Hal would get up his courage to propose to her some day, and we would have the thing off our minds. But what fellow wants to ask a lady monkey on a string? That's all I have to say."

"That's all I have to say," Jane heard as she and the dog romped past the window.

"Gee, I'm glad I got out! I'll bet she's blowing off about me, Charley. Here, look! Say your prayers, you hairy old sinner! Say your prayers quick, and don't forget Cornelia!"

When she had washed the dishes Jane appeared on the porch where the rest of the family was sitting.

"Say, Corney," she hesitated, "wouldn't you like to go in and have some music?"

"Oh, let the poor neighbors have a peaceful evening. And besides, I must get out these programs for the literary meetings next year."

"Next year—oh——" Jane turned back vaguely indoors. She belonged to the class that works by the day. A few moments later an uncertain discord arose at the piano and Jane began to sing sotto voce some of the "pieces" that her teacher had said were "not so bad at all," drifting finally to the songs of less soul and more body, which a merry group had been wont to shout about the piano in high school days. Cornelia and her programs soon sought remoter regions.

"It is too bad Jane has no one to accompany her," her mother remarked. "The other day over at Browns' she was singing with their phonograph, and got along real well. But this is the first time she has practiced at home for weeks."

"Thinks Hal will ask her to sing," grinned her father knowingly. "He won't mind her not being able to Paderewski her Galli-Curci." Jane struck a closing chord, with the usual quota of notes wounded and missing.

"Darn it," she grumbled to her reflection that gloomed back from the dark mahogany, "I wish I could be beautiful and clever. I wish I had done more practicing when I was young." She heard somebody coming.

"Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater!" she sang hilariously, and finished the accompaniment three counts behind her voice with elaborate care.

"Time for bed, little girl, if you want to conserve daylight." Her father stuck his head in at the door

Jane got up and walked upstairs. But she did not go to bed at once. For a long time she huddled against the window sill, looking out and listening for the train that would bring Hal. She had half a notion to slide down the wistaria vine under her window and watch the train come in; to get a glimpse of her old friend in his new uniform, so as to get used to the look of it. It is easier for a girl to be self-possessed if she sees her Romeo coming before he sees her. Some of them powder their noses; some of them take a deep breath. They all need a bit of help on the side, like that.

However, Jane knew that her sister always sat up late in her room, not mooning, as she herself was doing, but writing goodness knows what, in endless black-backed notebooks, that would make her the pride of the family some day when they came out in print. But the mooning ones make good copy, and Jane was disinclined to go across the moonlit lawn in sight of Cornelia's all-observing windows. No balcony acts were to be exhibited when they were so completely uncalled for.

Jane turned back to her little room aimlessly and saw the middy suit she had worn that morning hanging on the floor; an unhappy pair of walking boots planted firmly on her desk; a couple of photographs under the dressing-table—the wind had done that, at least. She clicked her tongue reproachfully and went to work. When all was in apple-pie order she moved her bed nearer the window so that she could look out into the night in its fairness of gleams and shadows; and she pushed the desk to a place against the wall where it would hide the results of the end of a snowball chase between herself and Cornelia during the Christmas vacation of the year before.

"Jane, what is the matter?" came a gentle voice from the hall.

"Sh'h'h! Mumsie, I'm just moving a

little furniture." Her suppressed giggle echoed a smothered laugh outside, and then silence fell. Jane put up her front hair on patent curlers and slept the sleep of a croquet champion.

It was the telephone—no alarm clock ever worked so well—that brought Jane sitting up and precipitated her to her feet next morning. She listened stealthily in the hall as her father answered.

"Hello!" . . . . No, sir. . . That's all right, sir. Somebody had rung the wrong number."

Jane stole back, said her prayers, put on her prettiest gingham dress and went down to breakfast. When Mr. Rothwell had gone to his little drugstore for the day, his wife and Cornelia suddenly decided that a shopping trip to the nearest city was necessary. Cornelia, in accord with the rich furnishings of her mind, had to have a certain amount of outward apparel to meet the demands of her appearance at college each year.

"Oh, dear!" thought Jane, as she dusted the reading lamp for the second time. "I believe mother has forgotten Hal is in town."

"You won't be lonesome, will you, little girl?" Mrs. Rothwell asked, coming upon her suddenly.

"Me?" Jane exclaimed incredulously. "Do I usually get lonesome when my wife goes to the country?" Throwing down her dust cloth, she slipped her arms between the slats of two high-backed chairs and marched them willy-nilly around the room.

"Mother, hurry up!" Cornelia called from the front steps.

"Hurry, Mother, or you will miss Cornelia and the interurban car!" She gave the little lady a good old-fashioned hug and pushed her out on the porch.

"There's one thing to be thankful for. I can fuss around all I want to and nobody will make fun of me," she comforted herself. She went in the garden and gathered flowers for the whole house, listening all the time for the distant tinkle of the telephone. Once it rang—they wanted her for a committee meeting at the library.

"I'm sorry, Miss Stivers," she apologized glibly. "I can't come, really. I'm looking for company—old family friends, you know." She hoped the recording angel might overlook the plural ending in his report.

She made a thick luscious sirup ready for lemonade at short notice. She gathered tiny red tomatoes and, set a pretty salad in her mother's biggest dessert mold. She patted cushions; piled the books on the tables carelessly with the ones on top that Hal might like to see; she got out her music and put it on the piano, but thought better of it and hid it. It would be less embarrassing to say, "It goes something like this: I may forget part of it," in an off-hand way, and then do the best she could. She was ready—and still no word from the returning hero.

At time for the postman, she loafed in the porch hammock with her knitting. There came the electric light bill for her father, a magazine for Cornelia, and a thin perfumed letter from Myra, one of her married classmates, asking for a shampoo recipe and telling of the exploits of their six-weeks-old infant. Dumbly she watched the poor postman, innocent target of our long-distance disappointments, until he turned off into Brundage street. She thought Hal might have sent a little note, even if he hadn't time to come. She felt herself grouchy at Myra, dear girl as she was, and very kind to write a letter in the midst of her busy happiness. "This won't do," said Jane. "Probably Hal didn't get in after all."

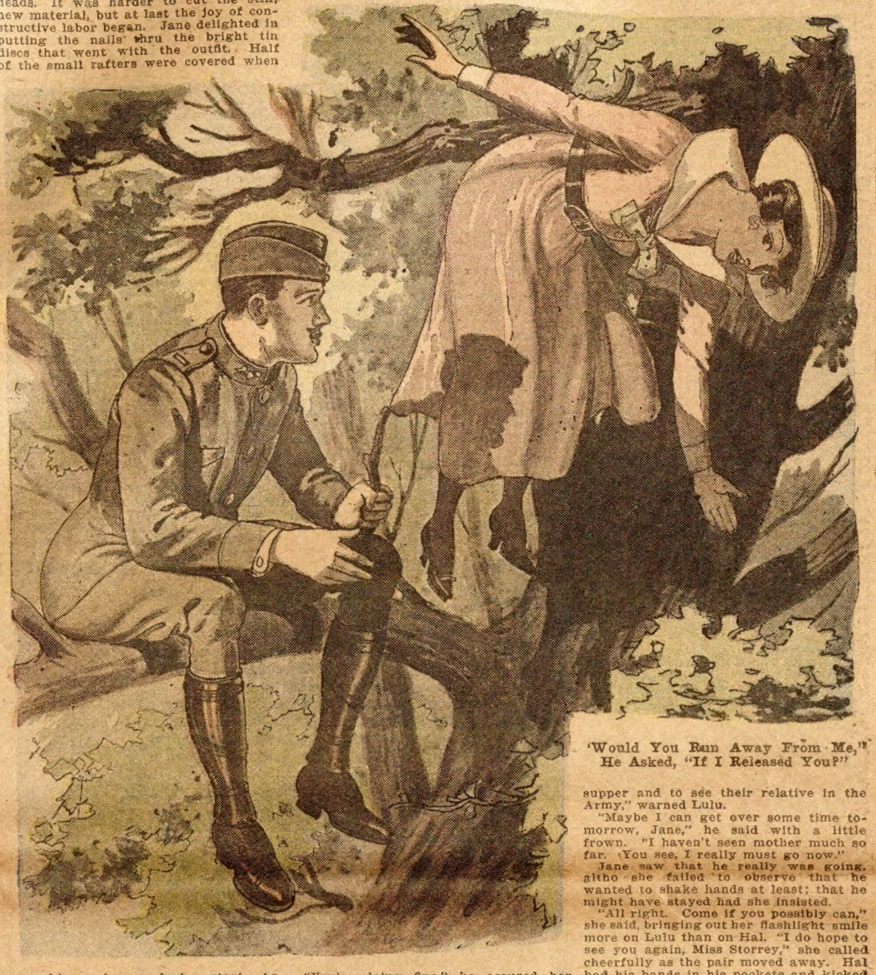
She stood in front of the little telephone for several minutes, wondering whether she had better not call up his mother.

"Jane Rothwell, you're a doggoned idiot when you're by yourself," she sneered. "To think of making such a scene in front of all the family furniture! Shame on you! Hal used to just hate silly girls."

Grandfather Rothwell's tall clock ticked benignly at these sensible words, as it had failed to do when, long ago, she and Hal tried to find where the tick came from. Then she realized that it was time for lunch, and ventured upon a bit of the salad to see if it promised well, and a good quantity of cold viands left in the refrigerator. There were no dishes to wash; there was nothing on earth to do but wait, and waiting for a man, especially when you are not sure he is coming at all, is not a satisfying occupation, to say the least.

"The next train from the West will not be in until two-forty-three," she reasoned. "He will go to his mother first, and maybe both of them will come down this evening. That will give me just about enough time to put the new roofing on the chicken house, and daddy won't have to hire a man to do it." Truly, a laudable idea!

Ten minutes later she had taken off her pretty dress, and, clad in her father's overalls, much rolled up to fit, and a historic middy that had helped to paint the red barn the summer before, she deposited a roll of all-proof roofing on the ground, and ascended a small ladder to the top of the little chicken house. The old roof came off easily, leaving only a few rough patches about the rusty nail heads. It was harder to cut the stiff, new material, but at last the joy of constructive labor began. Jane delighted in putting the nails thru the bright tin discs that went with the outfit. Half of the small rafters were covered when approaching voices made her start. As the roof sloped gently from the neighbors' fence upward to the highest point, it was necessary for her to crawl up cautiously to the top of the shed roof in order to peer over and see the visitors.



'Would You Run Away From Me," He Asked, "If I Released You?"

There seemed to be a dozen faces below her, all looking up with interest and expectation.

"Hal!" Jane cried impetuously to the khaki center of the group, and held out a tarry little paw. Hal in his immaculate uniform scrambled up the ladder, seized the paw joyfully—shook it hard. For a moment neither of them said anything. They gazed searchingly into each other's eyes and smiled satisfied. Nothing important was changed in either.

"You've got a little mustache, Hal!" She had just noticed it.

"Pretty nifty, Jane?" He was pleased and blushed a little. "You ought to have one yourself," he laughed a little boisterously to help along with it.

Jane was glad he still said the same kind of silly things to her. Sometimes he was almost clever in talking with other people. A pointed witticism from Hal would have been a cruel stab.

"I wasn't looking for you—so soon." Her apology took in her occupation and her overalls.

"Glad we surprised you then!" Hal said heartily. "I would kind of hate to see you different. When we heard somebody pounding and couldn't find anybody at the house, I said, 'I'll bet I know who's making that big noise.' She's the healthiest little person you ever saw," he praised, turning to the others. "Jane, this is Miss Storrey. We were good friends down in Texas, and you may believe I was glad to see her up here. This is Mr. Parkes. Parkes is a classmate of mine from Detroit. He happened into town on business at the lucky time, didn't he? I guess you've seen Mabel before."

So there were only three people besides Hal. Jane recovered from her daze. "I'm mighty glad to see all of you. Are you having a nice time in our little town, Miss Storrey?" she asked politely, trying to read the real nature of the girl Cornelia had described to her.

"Am I, Hal?" the girl turned her big eyes to him and smiled appealingly an odd crooked smile.

"You're doing fine," he assured her cheerfully. "This is the place to be, all righty. I hope you won't be in a hurry to leave."

Jane glanced questioningly at Mabel Needham, but she was much interested in Mr. Parkes, and was already drawing him away toward the walk beside the border of old-fashioned flowers.

"We're going on East, soon," Miss Storrey volunteered to Jane. "My mother and I, I mean by we."

"How nice! One time I took a trip to Boston, and it was lovely. That is the farthest I ever went."

"I'm afraid it won't seem as good to me as the West!" the Storrey girl exclaimed with a far-away look. "The happiest days of my life have been out there this year."

"I have a hunch that you're not dead yet, and have several more years of that kind coming to you. Buck up, Lulu!"

"I hope so, Hal." Lulu bit her lip and turned away.

"You must all come in the house and we'll have some lemonade," Jane said graciously, trying to forget the girl's reminiscent tone.

"In the chicken house?" the fair guest laughed, showing her pretty teeth.

"No, we only use it for ourselves; we have another house where we take company," Jane joined in the joke with good will.

"That is sweet of you to ask us, but really I think we had better go on. Perhaps we can drop in another time when you're not so busy." Jane had almost forgotten her overalls, but now she remembered them miserably, and did not insist. "I am so glad to know you. Hal has spoken often about you and the pranks you used to play. You can't imagine how happy I was to see him again. We have been sitting on Mabel's porch for over an hour talking over old times."

Jane murmured some polite nothing.

"Yes, we'll come over another time," Hal seconded glumly. Then again he came up the little ladder.

"How are the folks, Jane?"

"Better and better every day. They want to see you so much. They'll all be at home this evening. Can't you come over then?"

"Remember, your mother said that whole family of cousins is coming for supper and to see their relative in the Army," warned Lulu.

"Maybe I can get over some time tomorrow, Jane," he said with a little frown. "I haven't seen mother much so far. You see, I really must go now."

Jane saw that he really was going, altho she failed to observe that he wanted to shake hands at least; that he might have stayed had she insisted.

"All right. Come if you possibly can," she said, bringing out her flashlight smile more on Lulu than on Hal. "I do hope to see you again, Miss Storrey," she called cheerfully as the pair moved away. Hal had his hands in his pockets and kicked the grass as he walked; once he said something to the girl, and she laughed and said, "Nonsense, Bassanio," quite clearly, and put her hand on his arm.

Jane's hands were gripping the edge of the roof, and her smile had faded. She could not find another as she hunted savagely among the shiny discs; but they reminded her of the tin whistles she used to get in candy, so she began a loud and carefree whistling and a terrific pounding, whether she hit the nails or not. And the chicken-house roof was finished long before sunset.

As the Rothwells sat on the porch that evening, Jane's father could not praise her enough. A girl who could put on a roof that way was as good and better than a boy any day, he declared, and Jane was moved to bring out her hoarded lemonade and treat them all around.

"Have you seen anything of Hal yet?" he asked at length.

"Oh, yes, he was over a little while this afternoon. Maybe he'll come again tomorrow. He was so disappointed not to see the rest of us."

"Same old boy?" inquired Mr. Rothwell, quizzically.

"Yes. Only he has a mustache now."

Cornelia hated mustaches and wondered at his lack of taste.

Jane felt herself slipping off into the gulf where she had struggled in the morning. Another question and she would lose her footing.

"H'ya, h'ya, h'ya! Charley!" she called. He was her refuge in times of stress. Charley was sleepy, poor old dog, but he romped obligingly about the front yard with her. A chewed-up tennis ball was the chief goal for his efforts, as he was disinclined to go after anything newfangled and sanitary.

"Get it, doggo," Jane yelped as the ball went over the hedge and into the street. Then her heart almost choked her: an automobile was coming. She rushed toward the faithful old dog intent on his quarry. The machine swerved just in time, and clutching Charley's collar, Jane looked up in time to get a good view of the occupants. There was a trio of Hal's country cousins in the front seat; in the back seat, Hal, Lulu and a much-dressed elderly woman, evidently Mrs. Storrey. All smiled lively relief, and went spinning on.

Jane led her dog back, past the family rejoicing over his narrow escape.

"It was a load of Hal's cousins that came for supper," she enlightened her relatives. "They are all taking a ride in their flivver for digestion." Then she made her way to the back yard and sat down heavily on a small chicken coop.

"Charley," she confided, holding his shaggy head and waggling it slowly from side to side, "tonight I wouldn't even care if I got chicken lice on me." And Charley laid his head on her knee and blinked in sympathy.

"Where have you been all this time?" Cornelia intercepted her sister as she was trying to sneak up to her room. "Eulalia Howard called up and invited you to her picnic for that Storrey woman tomorrow. She's counting on your coming."

"Thanks, Corney. I expect I'll go," she answered, reaching the door of her room before Cornelia could turn on the lights. "Miss Storrey seems real nice. I met her today," she said gamely, and closed the door.

And Jane went to the picnic, in a daintier dress than she usually wore to such affairs, with thoughts of making up for the impression of the day before, during the fateful call. It was an all-girl picnic, she discovered, and most of them had come with the idea of resting all day in the pretty spot beside the river, to which they walked languidly thru the hot sun. A few more industrious souls had brought knitting; one was making blue tatting for her hope chest, which she mentioned frequently enough that every one was warranted in thinking that her hopes might be sureties. Jane had, in a way, lost out in the lives of these girl friends while she was in college. Altho she enjoyed many of their interests, at times they seemed more distant in some intangible way than many real strangers she met.

As they were settling themselves for a good long chat about the usual things that average girls can discuss endlessly, it was with relief that Jane heard the guest of honor wishing for a certain common butterfly for her collection. Behold, she had in her knitting bag her bottle of execution for the creature ready and waiting.

"I think a hobby is something people can't afford to miss," she said. "I get a new one every so often and ride it until the rockers come off. Just now it is butterflies. I thought we might get one or two in our rambles." The girls assented pleasantly and began their gentle gossip.

"Why, I'll get you one of those things in a jiffy," she offered, and skipped away lightly down the bank of the stream in the willow shade that bordered it. At some distance from the picnic, she stopped suddenly. Very youthful voices were chattering excitedly, and howls of pain or rage came at intervals between queer choking sounds. When Jane reached a spot where she could find the cause of the disturbance, she saw six little boys, far below the age that was allowed to go swimming, grouped helplessly and doubtfully near the other bank in the shallows. Farther out, she recognized the small brother of her hostess. It was he who was roaring, and he hopped up and down lamely and in evident pain.

"Georgie, dear, what is the matter?" she inquired, coming down to the edge of the water.

"Sumpin's got his toe—maybe a devilfish," explained a wide-eyed urchin draped in his older brother's bathing suit. Another roar from Georgie. Jane promptly took off her pumps and waded in, carrying them under one arm, and reached the little fellow, who rolled blue orbs of agony toward her capable face. Altho she was many inches taller than himself, he clung to her as if she had been Pallas Athene.

"Lift your foot as high as you can, honey," she commanded. With a grimace he did so, and a small-sized turtle appeared, attached thereto. "It's just a little turtle," she comforted. "Lift it up higher!"

Reassured, but grunting, he made a supreme effort. Steadying him with her left arm, Jane made a sturdy, well-aimed stroke with the low heel of one of her slippers, and in the resulting splash the little creature let go and disappeared. Georgie held on to her and hopped to the bank, looking fearfully into the water behind.

"Are you out with the girls' blamed old picnic, Jane?" asked Danny Warner. "What do they want to eat so close by the swimmin' hole for, anyhow? We heard 'em laughin' up the crick and we moved down here."

"It will be a miracle if they didn't hear Georgie," Jane feared.

"Don't tell on us, Jane. They'd be awful mad if they found out we went swimmin' out here. But I made all the kids wear bathin' suits so it would be all right if they ketched us."

"Now you get dressed while I go back and get some things I left, and we'll walk home together. My dress is all wet. Oh, look! Somebody catch that brown butterfly for me. Don't hurt it—don't break its wings!" It was the grateful little Georgie that finally got it.

Jane gave it a gentle pinch where the wings joined the body, and put it in the crown of her sun hat, praying inwardly that nothing might befall.

"Don't tell on us!" the youngsters cautioned as she waded back recklessly.

"I won't. You wait for me. We'll go home the back way, thru the fields."

Consternation stared at her when she reached the scene of the picnic.

"I—I sort of slipped in the river," she apologized, "but I didn't drown at all about the waist. I guess I shall go home, tho, as I don't look very festive." There were protests, commiseration, advice. She must at least have some of the refreshments, Eulalia insisted. Eulalia, blessed with younger brothers and sisters, had great faith in the healing power of food. Jane's good nature put them off finally.

"Here is your butterfly, Miss Storrey," she whispered, taking off her hat and handing it to the girl with quite a friendly smile, considering.

"Say, you do beat the band, don't you!" exclaimed that young lady with sincere admiration. "Do you know," she confided, making sure that no one else heard, "if they weren't giving this spread for me, I'd go back with you. I get tired of hearing them talk. I do wish I could be with you. I want to talk about somebody we both know." Her dark eyes searched Jane's face, but got no answering gleam. She pursed her lips and raised her eyebrows.

"Please don't worry about me," Jane begged hastily. "You'll have a lovely time. I'll go home across the fields," she informed all, "so as not to shock the traveling public. It's too warm to take cold." And at last she had made her escape and had joined the little boys after her third crossing of the stream. Wasn't it worth it to get away from the outing? If she were there she could keep from discussing her, but she would have to hear everybody else's joys and troubles.

A GIRL LIKE YOU

It's the faith of a little girl like you
That counts when the world goes wrong,
When a fellow's down and mighty blue
And his lips can voice no song,
When the loneliness seems hard to bear
And the scheme of life proves tame,
It's knowing somehow, that still you care
That makes a fellow game.

When he wants to quit in the first, long mile,
Turn back in the grilling race,
When the goal beyond don't seem worth while
And he balks at the speedy pace;
It's then that the faith of a girl like you
Makes him reckon the coward's cost,
And he plays to win as a man should do,
The game he might have lost.

It's girls like you that keep men straight,
Keep them white clear thru and clean,
It's girls like you that make men great
And not what they might have been;
Oh! It's good for the man when all seems night,
When the clouds hide the goal from view,
Just to knuckle down and fight, yes fight,
For the sake of a girl like you.

As the little band entered the village, they stuck consistently to the back streets and alleys as far as possible.

"Now, you fellows sort of group around me as we walk," Jane suggested as they began to meet people. "Then they won't notice my draggled clothes." And they did not, indeed. It was a common sight to see her conducting a Sunday school class on local excursions, and everybody smiled and asked if they had had a good time.

"Yes, ma'am!" chorused the little boys sweetly, "just fine!"

Suddenly Jane felt a chill strike her that did not come from her wet dress. It was the sight of a familiar figure. To meet Hal of all people, and looking so, again! She gasped feverishly for an idea, and it came.

"Here comes a soldier that's visiting in town," she whispered to the boys. "Now let's stay in a real close bunch, with me in the middle, and if he looks at us, we'll salute and cheer for him and surprise him."

The boys highly approved of her daring and patriotic plan.

"We'll yell, 'Soldier, rah, Soldier, rah, rah, rah, Soldier!'" she coached.

"Then we'll wind up with 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' won't we?" Danny asked, pumping his arms in delight. There was no time to modify her suggestion, which was well received by the others. Hal was upon them, almost like his old self again, but it was not his to speak.

To a man, the youngsters saluted, cheered, sang three verses of the national song without a slip, saluted again and strode on, taking in their midst a Jane whose ears had grown pinker with each successive verse of the anthem. When he looked at her, she turned her head and began to beat time. A puzzled man in khaki stood looking after them.

To save herself from the fate of Lot's wife, Jane could not have helped turning around to note what effect the crazy demonstration had had. She saw him halting irresolutely, with the remains of his surprised grin fading into bewilderment at the neglect of his old comrade. Even in her pranks she was usually cordial. Was she mad at him, or what?

A couple of alert little dogs answered his question. Attracted by the cheering, they had become interested in each other at its cessation and before any one noticed them were in the ring for canine laurels.

"Whee! A dog fight!" Jane's bodyguard suddenly deserted her for the growling, snapping excitement, and left her standing helplessly, twisting her fingers and hanging her head, with her wet dress clinging forlornly.

"Oh!" Hal breathed relief to himself after a quick glance. "She's been doing stunts and has fallen into the creek again poor little girl!" Aloud he called, raising his cap, "I'll see you again, Miss Rothwell." And chivalrously turned to the dog fight. When he looked again she was gone.

"Isn't that just like him! He pretended not to notice, and he never laughed at me a bit!" Jane hugged herself as she sneaked in thru the alley and the back door of the red barn. For some reason, known only to herself, Jane took great delight in suppressing details concerning her watery experience, and troubled Cornelia's scientific mind considerably.

The latter, returning from a trip to her father's soda fountain in the early afternoon, met the picnickers straggling homeward, and got more details from Cecilia, Mabel Needham's younger sister, who got in on the celebrations because she happened to be living where Lulu was visiting. She enjoyed the novelty with all the capacity of her twelve years.

"Just a few of the young people are going to have a bacon bat this evening," Cornelia informed her mother and Jane. "Some of them planned it on the way home from the picnic. Are you going, Jane?"

"I haven't even heard of it."

"Oh, of course, you got wet chasing Miss Storrey's butterfly and had to come home. But you will be invited anyway. If you are not, it is a shame."

Certainly Jane was invited, as far as intention went. But as the little party stopped for her shortly before supper time they did not find her as usual, rushing about, trying to add the final touches to a mysterious basket. Jane had invented a new kind of sandwiches for every picnic until this one.

"Why, she went to the playground with some kids," volunteered Susie Meacham, from next door, when the Rothwell family was unable to account for her whereabouts. "A whole lot of little kids, they were, in Buster Brown suits. They went just a-whooping and a-yelling, Jane as bad as the worst."

"Oh!" Mabel Needham's jaw dropped, and she sat down blankly on the steps. "I was to call Jane up, and I forgot to."

A pause followed.

"Do you think she'll go with us now?" Eulalia asked nervously. "It would make anybody feel sort of queer, tho Jane isn't—well—funny—like some girls would be."

"We'll go after her. She'll have to go." Hal started off with a bulging package under each arm. Lulu Storrey promptly followed, and everybody trooped along to the village playground, where the chief excitement at the moment seemed to be about a horizontal ladder.

"Puzzle—to find Jane!" Lulu chuckled—and it was a puzzle, too, for she had on a gym suit exactly like those of the children with her, and was perilously near the same size.

"By her pep ye shall know her!" Mr. Parkes pointed to a little figure that swung and waggled more than the rest. "I think she's a great little engine, myself. They say she can pound nails and whistle, too." He winked at Hal. "Oh, it'll be a lucky man that gets her handcuffed and straitjacketed."

"I don't believe she thinks much about a home of her own." Mabel's tone was sadly pitying, and so domestic that everybody had to laugh, and set her blushing and protesting volubly.

"We've looked everywhere for you, Jane dear," Eulalia chided. Jane was hanging midway on the ladder. Her body stiffened and she turned her head quickly.

"We forgot to call you up on the phone, and when we stopped at your house no Jane was to be seen." Eulalia was honest and to the point, but the rest were uneasy until Jane's mouth expanded agreeably.

"Oh, that's all right. Nobody can help forgetting things. I do, often. I've forgotten already how I disgraced myself falling in the creek this morning. Wasn't I a sight?" She gave a whole-hearted laugh, and the rest laughed, too, in much relief.

"She's a good bet!" Parkes nudged Hal zestfully.

"Maybe I don't know it!" Hal growled.

"We're just giving an exhibition of the Great Simian Treetoppers," Jane explained, swinging her feet to and fro. The baconless batters drew closer.

"You like the kids as well as you used to, don't you, Jane?" Hal laid his bulky packages on the ground and put his hands on his hips. He stood watching her from under his eyebrows as he used to do when they had to settle important matters.

Jane's hands were tired. She dropped lightly to her feet and stood rubbing the little callouses in her palms, looking solemnly at Hal flanked by two dainty maidens, the nearest one Lulu.

"Yes, when I like anybody once, I like them always. Heavens!" she thought then, "maybe I am going to blush!"

"Look!" she shouted, and swooping down upon the little folks she boosted them up to the ladder and set them to traveling along it like so many little monkeys.

"How funny! Do it again!" the audience applauded. "Then we must start."

"I want to try it!" Hal surprised every one by his unexpected agility which followed a suitably clownish beginning. His length interfered more than a little with the performance.

"Now I've shown you how. Let's see some of you girls do what I did. Come on, Parkes! Here, Lulu!" He approached each in turn and sent them into protesting gigglishness. He wheeled suddenly.

"Jane, walk for the ladies!" Jane backed away from him, biting her lip, until she leaned against the vertical supports at the end.

"Jane, do as the big chief tells you!" He walked up to her solemnly, lifted her up with his big hands and said: "Put your little hooks over the rounds." She did so. "Now walk!" She walked. Applause from the audience, but Hal paid no attention to it. Jane had reached the end of her trip and he was there to meet her.

"Good girl!" he said as he lifted her down. She blushed a bit and tried to keep her chin from trembling. "Now you're going to have a nice wheatless meal for your reward. Come on along!"

"No, I can't. I'm not ready to go anywhere."

"Oh, we'll wait, honey," Mabel assured her. "I feel just awful about it. I was the one that forgot."

Jane looked at the party and calculated in her mind, "Two boys, four girls. Lulu, Hal, Eulalia; Mabel, Mr. Parkes, Cecilia; Jane Everett Rothwell, official tar bucket." "No," she said decidedly. "I haven't anything for you to eat. I won't go, I don't think."

"Jane!" Hal was looking out from under his eyebrows again. "You go home and put on a dress if you have one handy." Jane winced a little and walked off. "The rest of you go on. I'll wait for Jane and also the salt that you remember we forgot. Jane will furnish that for the feast. Now scatter!" They scattered. Lulu scattered last, but when she saw that Hal was gaining on Jane, who was already well on her way, she smiled inscrutably, got as near as she could to Mr. Parkes' protection, and seemed to make the best of it.

Hal reached Jane's front steps a few

(Continued on Page 18.)

It Isn't Too Late to Start This Serial of Mystery

THE HEAD OF ADAM

By Victor Ardmore

What the Story Is About

BENTON DUDLEY, a promoter, thru seeking to evade a maiden aunt on her way thru San Eugenio, goes on a fishing trip past the Lane Museum of Art, and on reaching his own home discovers that a valuable painting has been hidden under the seat of his chaise. He starts out to return the picture, and encounters Jerrimore, a secret service man on the lookout for smugglers. After an exciting race Jerrimore leaves him, and a mysterious stranger makes Dudley take him into his carriage. This man soon quits his company and Dudley starts on his way home to be hailed by Rodley, who asks Dudley to accompany Miss Clara Lane to her home. This he does, and when he returns to his home discovers that he has been riding around all night carrying a wooden plank in his chaise, instead of the valuable painting. He goes to look for the painting in his barn, and is assailed and rendered unconscious. On the following morning the sheriff of San Eugenio rides to his home to put Dudley under arrest. Blount, the caretaker of the museum, has met foul play and accuses Dudley of assaulting him.

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CHAPTER V.

A THIEF IS WANTED.

DUDLEY suddenly felt something go wrong with his heart.

"Hiram Blount injured?" he repeated. "And accuses me? Why, that's absurd. Why should I want to harm him?"

"Why should anybody harm him?" Martin replied. "A more genial, peaceable man never lived. He always sleeps at the art museum, you know. Well, there was some extra work to do today, so David Kinglake, custodian of the gallery, went there early. He found poor Hiram there, badly beaten and perhaps fatally hurt. He is now at Darlington Lane's, feeble and unconscious——"

"Then how is the assailant known?" the promoter interrupted.

"Under treatment he rallied briefly, and during that time he declared that it was you who attacked him."

"Why," cried Dudley, having a period of beclouded judgment, "I have not been anywhere near the museum lately."

The chief of police looked at him sharply.

"James Stanton says he met you just this side of that building, soon after dark, last evening. You were driving. Examination of the museum lawn shows that you entered the private grounds there, not by way of the drive but across the lawn, and there you tied your horse and left him so long that he stamped the earth freely while waiting. Perhaps you will explain?"

Dudley flushed, feeling himself hemmed in. Between the betraying signs so truly mentioned and the further fact that Hiram had seen him by the museum door, he seemed to be hard pressed by trouble. Under the impulse of the moment he decided to speak without reserve on one point.

"Well, the fact is, I went fishing," he explained.

"Fishing? Where?" asked Martin, his tone peculiar.

"In the stream back of the museum."

"What did you expect to catch?"

"Fish!"

"If you refer to the finny tribe, your explanation falls flat, since there has never been a fish in that brook since this region was settled by white men. Perhaps you will do well not to enlarge on the fishing feature. Now, Dudley, I don't want to be unkind, but, as I've said before, you are under restraint. Brown, our local magistrate, expects you, and is waiting at his office."

"Maybe I'd better go," the promoter said thoughtfully.

"Considering that you are arrested, maybe you had," replied Martin, smiling sarcastically.

Dudley prepared, but, feeling that he would return very soon, did not trouble to notify his servants. While saddling it occurred to him that Martin had not mentioned the Head of Adam, so it was possible that the loss of the painting had not been discovered.

It was an hour later that Peter Allen, urgently summoned by a special messenger, arrived at Magistrate Brown's office. The message had made it known to him that Dudley was in trouble, and he was thunderstruck to learn that his friend was held for alleged assault, pending the furnishing of bail.

The accused man told everything frankly as far as his drive to the art building was concerned, tho he had not mentioned the Rembrandt directly or indirectly, nor told of anything after he first left the museum grounds. Now, Peter corroborated him as to the motive for the drive.

"Yes," declared Allen, "Dudley wanted to avoid his aunt who was due here with the excursion party, and asked me to meet her as his substitute, and it was I who suggested that he go to the Lane Museum, and try fishing in the brook at its rear. Perfectly true, Mr. Brown."

He then turned to his friend and added an apology.

"I found an old acquaintance with that excursion party, Dudley, and went along with him as far as Santa Barbara. Coming home I had a bad fall from my horse, sprained my back wretchedly, and have since been in bed, suffering rather severe pain, until your messenger came. Now, come along to my office——"

"After bail is furnished!" interrupted Brown dryly.

"I object to bail!" exclaimed Chief Martin. "Blount may die!"

The point was raised, and as Martin was stubborn some talk was necessary, but the magistrate quoted the law that mere assault was a bailable offense, and he had his way. Peter went out, and, after some difficulty, found men to go on the bond.

Dudley was leaving the office when David Kinglake, custodian of the art museum, arrived. He was a dreamy, inoffensive person who meant well to all mankind, and was now mild of manner, tho visibly excited.

"How is Hiram Blount?" demanded Brown abruptly, seized with worry.

"I have nothing new from him," replied Mr. Kinglake, "but there is dreadful news from the museum. Our favorite painting, Rembrandt's Head of Adam, is gone, stolen——"

"Since when?" demanded Martin crisply.

"It was in its place yesterday. Now we know the motive for the assault. Hiram doubtless detected the thief, and the rest followed."

Here Kinglake turned his gaze seriously upon the promoter, and added:

"And Mr. Dudley has been much interested in that matchless picture! He once asked me the price of it, and I've seen him stand before it, rapt, earnest and prodigal of words of praise for the grandeur of it."

The stroke had come, the loss of the Rembrandt was publicly known, and Dudley was in the maelstrom. Not being able to prove that his alleged admiration of the Head of Adam, in the past, had been purely sarcastic, he must face the results of his supposed deep admiration, but he did not do it with composure.

"I've never tried to buy it," he remarked vaguely.

"But," added Mr. Kinglake gloomily, "you admit, if I understand your position, that it was you who took it last night?"

"What are you talking about? Admit it? Not for an instant. I'm no thief, and I've not seen that miserable picture in weeks."

The last words escaped him almost unknowingly. Eager to deny guilty knowledge, he had denied innocent knowledge as well. Having spoken, he decided to hold to his statement. The Rembrandt was not in his possession, and there was no danger that the real thief would bring it forward.

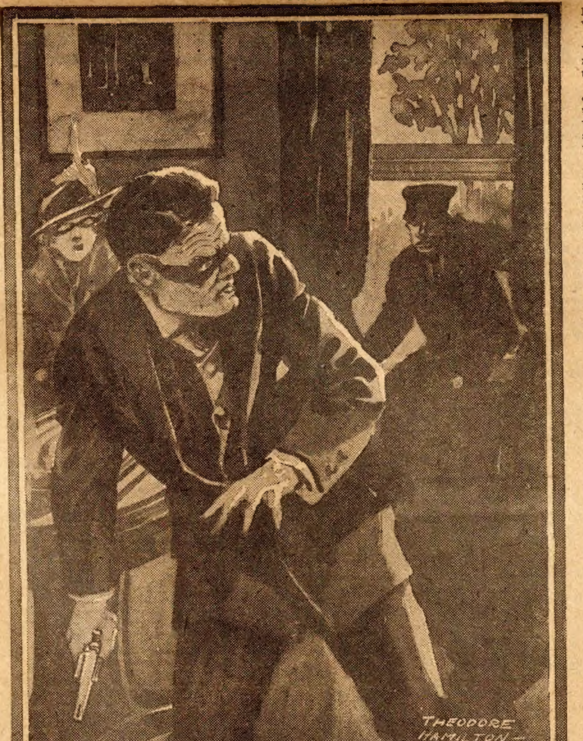
"You may be guiltless," admitted the custodian reluctantly, "but this is very serious. That painting is easily worth $75,000. Works by Rembrandt, great among the greatest of the old masters, are rare, and the Head of Adam is a masterpiece. It is glorious, grand, superb! I would not be severe, Mr. Brown, but as Mr. Dudley is a prisoner, I beg that you will hold him very securely."

"He has already been released on bail," explained the magistrate. "As far as is now known, Hiram Blount is not fatally injured."

"That part may be all right, but theft is different. Theft is a serious matter. Really, he should not be permitted to go free."

"Dudley is already at liberty under good bail," Brown repeated stiffly. "No proof has been given that he has stolen anything. Until it is done I shall certainly not curtail his freedom."

Kinglake and Martin looked dissatisfied, but even the latter said no more. Dudley suggested that his premises be searched for the missing painting, but the chief was wise enough to decline, realizing that no thief would invite such a step unless the plunder was hidden elsewhere.



There Was No Time to Flee, So They Stood Still and Waited.

The promoter left the official presence with Peter Allen.

"This is a bad fix!" he lamented. "Of course, I shall get clear of it all right, but how will it affect my project for getting capital to back me in my ocean-gold enterprise? Will that notable plan be ruined just when I am close to the road to riches? If this absurd charge blasts my reputation, nobody will supply me with money to wrest the gold from river mouths. Bad, bad! The only bright spot in sight is that Aunt Arethusa has passed by San Eugenio with the excursionists and will soon be en route for South America."

"I'm sorry to say," replied Peter, "that she is not gone. When I met the excursionists I learned that she stopped off at Obiscaro to have a tooth treated. She will be here as soon as she's able to travel."

"What? Not gone? Coming here, after all? Peter, that woman will get me hanged somehow. Drop her for now, tho. I want to talk with you. Want to? Why, I've simply got to talk!"

By that time they were at Allen's office. They entered, and, free from unfriendly ears, Dudley poured forth the whole miserable story. Yet, even while talking, his thoughts were largely elsewhere and he was impatient of the delay.

"That's the history of one night," he said in conclusion. "Now, think it over and I'll see you again. Peter, it is clear that, in such a crisis as this, I ought to go to Darlington Lane and deny all guilt. It will only be decent and it may soften that man's heart. Think my adventure over and see what you can advise when I return."

With this he rushed out and, heedless of Allen's call, swung into the saddle and was soon galloping away south by the road so often traveled the night before. As he rode into the Lane grounds he saw their owner and Miss Clara sitting on the piazza.

And Lucius Jerimore was with them.

The promoter gained the impression that the members of the group were not in the happiest of moods, but he passed it by lightly. What were petty quarrels compared with the matter of the Head of Adam?

He was walking briskly from the drive to the house when Darlington Lane rose and started to enter.

"Wait a bit, sir, if you please!" Dudley called eagerly. "I want to speak with you."

The owner of the art museum turned, waved his hand and made reply: "I will refer you to my daughter, sir!" and with this he disappeared.

Unsatisfactory as the reply was to the caller, it had to be accepted, and he turned to the other persons. Jerimore was looking at him in what resembled sulky hostility, but Miss Clara came forward with a smiling welcome.

"This is very kind of you, Mr. Dudley," she said sweetly. "We were stagnating here, and you really must enliven matters."

"I? Great Scott, I fear I've lost the art. You can surmise why I have come. I'm very sorry about Hiram Blount and your loss."

"We are encouraged to hope for the best concerning Hiram."

"Of course you know what folks are saying about me?"

"No," and her tone was kind. "What is it?"

"Why, they claim that Hiram has charged the assault upon me."

"He said that only once, and was doubtless out of his head then."

"The explanation made by the public is ridiculous," put in Jerimore, with an unpleasant smile. "They say you were enamored of the Head of Adam, and found a way to get it."

"Then they say what is absolutely false!" cried Dudley. "I have not harmed Hiram, nor have I the Rembrandt."

"You were acquitted before you declared your innocence," replied Clara promptly. "My father and I free you from all blame, so please don't think about that ridiculous painting. We want space to hang a marine view by the younger Vandervelde, and this gives us the opportunity."

"Your forbearance is most kind, but I repeat that I am innocent."

"No harm will come of this," said Jerimore languidly, "unless Hiram dies."

"Why, I thought he was in no actual danger."

"We don't think he is," Clara explained, "but the doctor will not promise that he is absolutely safe from an ill turn."

Dudley did not find his call enjoyable with Jerimore present, so he finished his business and prepared to go. Clara walked with him to the piazza steps.

"Now," she encouraged, "don't worry over this a bit. Hiram will get well, no doubt, and the Rembrandt is a triviality."

"Miss Lane," Dudley replied earnestly,

"It is exceedingly kind of you to be so considerate of my feelings."

"To be what?" she returned, looking at him in surprise. "Oh! I hadn't thought about you. Now you speak of it, I realize that you do feel interested. That is natural."

Then, bending her head slightly, she swiftly added: "Don't let anybody find it and get it out of California as soon as possible!"

The instant the last word was said she wheeled and tripped back to where the revenue man was seated.

"Now, Mr. Jerimore," she cried gayly, "I am ready for that game of cards. I will send you on your today's expedition soundly beaten. Come!"

She flitted into the house, and Jerimore promptly followed. Dudley remained on the steps, staring blankly after them. Her concluding words to him were not to be mistaken. She thought him the thief, and that the Head of Adam was still in his possession—more, she wanted him to keep it! He was staggered, and only the fact that she had deliberately run away prevented him from going to her again. Chagrined and angry, he walked slowly back to his horse and mounted.

His effort to clear his reputation had not been an overwhelming success.

He started away absent-mindedly, but resentment suddenly quickened his mind and he turned to his dominating passion. The Rembrandt was lost, and his reputation depended upon its safe return. Who had it now, and what did the puzzling events mean? Of all the perplexing series the most obscure was, why had the real thief placed the painting in his chaise?

Study of the complication had led him to believe that there must have been a second carriage in the grove, and that, in the darkness, the thief had mistaken the one for the other. His purpose now was to look for telltale wheel-tracks, but his search ended in failure.

Disappointed, he remounted, rode to San Eugenio, and was soon closeted with Peter Allen, to whom he reported latest developments.

"The mystery grows deeper," he concluded. "Lane won't even talk with me about the Head of Adam, and his daughter wants me to run away with it. They seem to scorn the great painting, but why? Tell me that?"

Peter held up protesting hands. "Don't!" he begged. "The problem is too deep for me. Wait a bit, tho. Isn't it clear that they have got the thing back? Somebody hit you on the head and left you unconscious in your stable. Depend upon it, that man was Darlington Lane, with Clara along. By this bold step they recovered the Rembrandt without paying a cent for their property. Of course they are indifferent now. Why shouldn't they be?"

"Hardly reasonable," Dudley returned. "Remember that after I got my senses back I found the property of a sailor in my stable. Clearly, Captain Varga's crew had been there. They haven't got the Head of Adam, I haven't and Darlington Lane hasn't. Who has it, and where is it? Yes, and why don't the Lanes want it back?"

"It seems that no living man can tell. Why do you care, anyhow?"

"Do you think I want to be regarded as a thief?"

"I suppose not," Peter admitted, "since you haven't got the plunder."

His levity passed away quickly and he did his best to help his friend, but nothing came of it, and when Dudley left the room, an hour later, his burdens went with him and clung fast. They were not less heavy when, shortly after nightfall, he stood meditating on the mystery near the door of his own house, close to where he had last seen the Head of Adam. His mental concentration was suddenly broken, however, when a slight, graceful figure appeared on the scene in saddle, coming with a mettlesome horse at a brisk pace.

Dudley was so surprised to see that it was Miss Lane that his greeting was delayed until she forestalled him with the opening words.

"Busy?" she asked crisply.

"No," he replied courteously.

"Get ready and go with me!"

"Go with you?" he returned blankly. "May I ask where?"

"I have learned who has the Rembrandt now, and I want you to help me steal it from him!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT BURGLARY.

DUDLEY was instantly attentive. His mind passed the last part of Miss Lane's answer by, but grasped tenaciously at the rest.

"You've learned who has the Rembrandt?" he repeatedly eagerly. "Who is it?"

"Listen! When Mr. Jerimore is in this section he makes his home at the house of his uncle, Otis Small. I've been very friendly with Mr. Small and his daughters, but as they are now all in Europe, I have not been at the house for weeks until today. Shortly after noon I wanted something I remembered having loaned to one of the young ladies just before they left, and as the house is occupied by the servants, I rode over. There was considerable difficulty in finding my property, and, among other rooms I entered in my search, I visited Mr. Small's study, where —can you guess?"

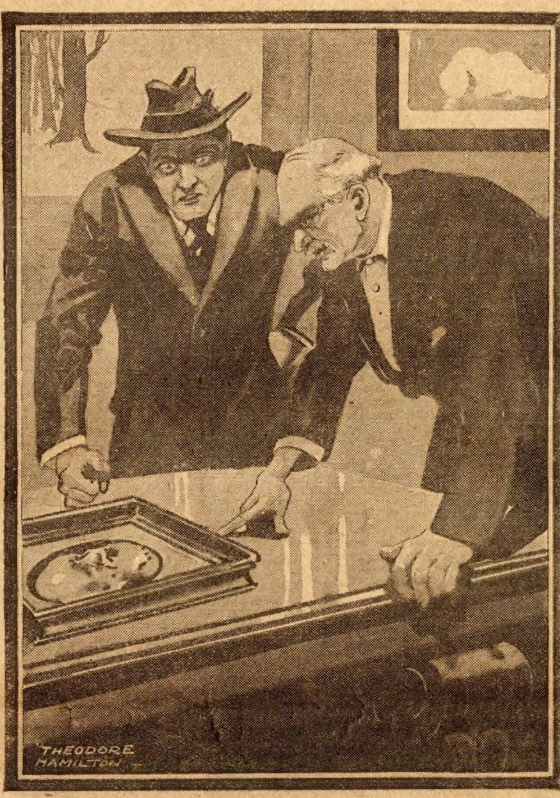
"I'm afraid not."

"Standing in a corner behind the table was—the Rembrandt!"

"How in creation did it get there?" the promoter gasped.

"Not by magic!" and Clara laughed merrily. "Can't you see? Lucius Jerimore was busy all night, and he scored at least one point. He got the Rembrandt!"

"What does he want of it?"



"This Is Not the Painting We Lost, Nor Is It a Genuine Rembrandt."

"Rumor says his pocket is not lined with dollars. Of course it was he. The servants are not to be doubted. Still, it is not the motive we should feel the chief interest in. I'm going to have that picture!"

"Most emphatically, yes!" Dudley exclaimed. "All you have to do is to go to Chief of Police Martin, or Mr. Brown, and get a search warrant——"

"That is precisely what I won't do!" affirmed Clara, with a stubborn nod. "I want the Head of Adam back secretly, and then we can claim it has never been lost, but simply overlooked. Father does not want it to be thought possible that a picture can be stolen from his collection. I will not consider Martin or Brown."

"Then how will you get it?"

"I've told you once. You and I are going there and steal it!"

"Suppose you get caught in the act?"

"Mr. Jerimore is off on a trip, hunting smugglers or something, and the servants retire early."

"The servants might hear possible intruders——"

"Are you afraid?" she cried tauntingly.

Dudley had listened and, meanwhile, had studied her expression. From a belief that she was merely joking he had passed to realization that she meant all she said, and his own mood changed accordingly.

"I'm afraid for you," he returned swiftly, "but as for myself—well, I'm willing to burglarize every house in San Eugenio and neighborhood to get that Rembrandt back!"

"Excellent! The aptitude with which I have taken to this little affair convinces me that I have a positive genius for burglary, and now I see I'm fortunate in my choice of a confederate. How long will it take you to get ready?"

"Two minutes."

"Go ahead! You will carry your revolver, of course——"

"For your protection."

"To protect those who may oppose us," she amended, with a laugh. "If anybody molests us they will need protection more than we shall."

Coming from her the intimation did not seem so very sanguinary, and Dudley hastened to the stable, untied his horse and began saddling in a fever of zeal. The recovery of the Head of Adam ought to be an easy matter. They had only to enter the Otis Small house——

He stopped short in his task of tightening the saddle-strap. It was only now that it came fully to his mind what that entering would be in the eyes of the law. Carried away by Clara's enthusiasm and his obsession to find the missing painting he had narrowed the world to his own vision. Law, as applied to burglary, abruptly clamored for place in his thoughts now.

"It's her own property, stolen from her," he finally muttered.

He held the strap still, meditated, wavered, stirred, and then forcibly yanked the strap thru the buckle and secured it. Mounting briskly, he rejoined Miss Lane, and she started at once.

"Are you sure you have your revolver?" she repeated.

"Quite sure."

"I think I have everything else. Are you familiar with the ways of the old-time robbers, Dick Turpin and Claude Duval?"

"Not intimately. They retired before I began."

"They must have been delightful men. We happen to have a book about them, so I've spent several hours this afternoon reading up on them. Altho desperate highwaymen in the eyes of the law, they befriended the poor, and were often gay, polite fellows, and always systematic. I think I have all the pointers on their ways that we need."

Dudley tried to catch her expression again. He was having insight to a complex nature he had never recognized in the past, but when he had returning qualms as to the nature of their errand he remembered that she, as well as himself, had great personal needs to satisfy, and that no harm to anybody else was intended.

"Looks to me as if the servants were in league with Jerimore," he interrupted. "Else why should that Rembrandt be leaning against the wall in the study? Thieves don't usually display their plunder so publicly."

"I could not explain in detail before. The room was Mr. Small's, and he is very exclusive regarding it. When he is at home the servants are allowed to enter only if work demands, and when going away he hides the key. No servant knows where it is kept, but I do, and that's how I was able to get inside. Now it becomes clear that Jerimore also knows."

"Looks that way."

"Isn't this venture delightful, Mr. Dudley?" and Clara grew vivacious.

"Thus far it seems rather noncommittal to me."

"It will be positively charming when we've broken open a door or window and entered. Just like a page from Dick Turpin's career, you know."

The promoter was unable to imitate the gay manner of his fair accomplice, and wished he had insisted on having the spoliation left to Chief Martin, but to refuse to keep on would be to lose his reputation for courage. Besides, the girl was really enjoying herself too well to be disappointed.

They rode in unusual darkness, the sky being hidden and a fog in the lower air that favored their purpose, lessening the chances of discovery. Nobody was encountered, and when they sighted the Otis Small house no light was burning there.

"We have timed ourselves well," said Clara. "The servants are in bed, and it will be the easiest of tasks to do the work."

"Do you know where to find a lamp?"

"A lamp!" scoffed the girl. "You must think me a very poor imitation of Dick Turpin. I have a dark lantern under my shawl, already lit, and have only to move the slide. I'll show you presently. We will turn into the grounds here and tie our horses to trees."

This was done, and then she thrust something into Dudley's hand.

"Put that on!" she directed.

"Eh?" he exclaimed, staring. "What's this? Looks like mourning goods."

"How absurd! It's a mask, and I have its mate. Do you think Dick Turpin would do work like this without one? In prosaic words, we have two squares of black cambric, properly perforated with openings for the eyes, and equipped with strings. Hurry and put yours on!"

Her fingers moved around her own mask, and their swift deftness was bewildering. Then she looked at Dudley, helplessly fumbling with his own disguise.

"What! Haven't you adjusted it yet?" she demanded.

"Not quite. Which side up does it go? I've got the string snagged around my left ear so that I am at a standstill."

"Really, you are stupid—almost!"

The promoter felt that the qualifying word was added to prevent the loss of a confederate, but she gave her help and arranged the mask, finally ending operations with a few words in praise of her own efforts.

"Isn't the mask a complete success?" she added.

He had already discovered that the eye openings were too close to his nose for proper use of his vision, suggesting that Miss Lane had fitted the mask to her own face, not his, but he passed the point by.

"Nothing could be better," he replied.

"Then we are ready to advance again. You will walk with leveled revolver, and I with the muffled lantern. Come!—it is for the Rembrandt!"

They skulked forward, turned the corner of the house, and then she stopped abruptly by a window.

"Here is the selected place," she whispered. "This sash has no fastening, as I noticed today. Raise it, and we shall be in the dining-room, with the whole house open to us. Good, up it goes! Now, if you will crawl in and assist me——"

It was a low window, and they were soon inside. A band of light, cast from her lantern, suddenly shot sword-like thru the gloom.

"Lead on, lead on!" he urged, as she seemed inclined to linger.

She led. Preceded by that sword of light the masked pair walked soft-footed into the hall and so up the stairs. Then she flitted to a corner of the upper hall, fumbled under the carpet at one point, and soon stood erect, displaying a long key with visible pride. She nodded, laid a finger on her mask where her lips were in ambush, and Dudley gave an answering nod. With servants near it was not time for words, and none was ventured.

Once more she led, fitted the key to a certain door very softly, turned it, and opened the way to the room. He kept at her heels, and presently, guided by the ray of light, he saw the greatest sight of his life.

The Head of Adam was leaning against the wall.

"Pick it up!" she directed, her voice and lantern alike shaking.

He wanted to dance, to shout, even to embrace Clara in his joy at recovering the painting, but her practical order recalled him to his senses. He lifted the picture with the greatest possible care, eager not to tear or soil the canvas. Once he had thought all old masters hideous, but, seen at that momen, the Head of Adam was more beautiful in his eyes than gold or diamonds.

"Come!" Clara breathed softly. "We cannot go too quickly now."

She moved to the door, but suddenly stopped.

"Something is wrong!" she nervously added. "There is a light downstairs. Stay here and let me investigate."

She flitted to the head of the stairs, but almost immediately returned.

"We're in a fix!" she announced uneasily. "Jerimore is back! He will arouse the servants, and we're sure to be discovered. What is to be done?"

CHAPTER VII.

A STARTLING ORDER.

BETRAYING increased timidity, Clara caught at Dudley's sleeve.

"What is to be done?" she repeated hurriedly.

"Save the Rembrandt!" the promoter promptly replied.

"But ourselves——"

"Are not to be considered. What we want is to save this art treasure, and we're going to do it. Dare you risk a leap from the window?"

"I hardly think so. We might break our necks."

"Or," he agreed quickly, "worse yet, injure the Rembrandt. We should have used a ladder. What was Jerimore doing?"

"Having something to eat at the table."

"When he has finished he will retire. Where is his room?"

"Next to this one."

"Unless, like myself, he has slept during the day, he will be tired and will fall asleep promptly. Really, Miss Lane, there is no danger. As soon as he sleeps we will walk out. Nothing could be simpler."

"But suppose he should enter this room to look at the picture he stole?"

"His look would get him into trouble. Let me have a look at the fellow."

Holding fast to the painting, the promoter went to the head of the stairs and looked. The position of the dining-room door favored him, and he saw Jerimore coated and hatted, eating with zeal. Dudley grew hopeful and he was not disappointed. When he had eaten his fill the revenue man did not remove his outer garments, but, turning toward the door, went into the outer air, and again turned the key behind him.

"Glorious!" Dudley commented, with Clara now at his elbow. "He only ran in for a bite, and now he's off on some expedition, possibly to spy upon the men of the Gray Gull."

"He certainly is annoying Captain Varga somehow," the girl agreed. "Everybody but Jerimore says the brig is an honest merchantman, but he will have it that she's a smuggler. You know all that, tho. I suppose we had better go away while we can."

"Nothing to prevent now, and I have the Rembrandt. Jerimore has put out the light below, and as we dare not use our lantern, we must feel our way."

"Oh, Mr. Dudley, suppose that Jerimore finds our horses?"

"I didn't think of that. You give me the creeps. We must hurry, tho not enough to awaken the servants by any careless noise."

Clara went back, relocked the chamber door and hid the key in its proper place, after which they crept downstairs. Reaching the dining-room, they were feeling their way when the window was suddenly darkened by a human form. Somebody was climbing in, and skillfully. There was no time to flee, so they stood motionless and waited, hoping to escape discovery. Dudley's first impression had been that another burglar was on the scene, but the outlines of the intruder showed him it was Jerimore. Probably he had chanced to discover the open window as he started away, and was investigating.

Getting his feet on the floor the revenue man advanced lightly, but so briskly that Dudley found himself hopelessly in his path. Not being able to shrink away without upsetting the table, he stood still, hoping for the best. Unfortunately Jerimore swerved a trifle, and thus collided squarely with the promoter.

"I've got you!" exclaimed the intruder, and laid violent hands on Dudley. "You are my prisoner!"

The amateur burglar knew that his assailant must be disposed of promptly, quietly and effectually, and he proceeded to do it. Jerimore had him by the throat and his grasp was unpleasant, but he paused long enough to lay the Rembrandt on the table. Then he grappled with the man and put forth all his muscle. For a moment the result was in doubt, but the officer tripped and, as he went down, Dudley pinned him there with none-too-gentle knees. Jerimore squirmed, and his antagonist held him and meditated.

What was to be done with him? The question was briefly troublesome, but a mental answer came. Trying to disguise his voice, Dudley hoarsely sent forth an order.

"James, find ropes and bring them to me. John, you and Paul stand ready with your revolvers. Shoot the first man who meddles here."

Jerimore's own throat was now compressed, and he gurgled and muttered, but Clara forgot him under the weight of the responsibility cast upon her. Aware that she represented the mythical James, John and Paul, she hurried from the room, soon returning with [illegible] stout cords. The prisoner, [illegible] from shouting alarm by the [illegible] his throat, evinced a desire to talk, [illegible] ignored. Dudley knew [illegible] knots, and he tied his [illegible] and as hastily as the [illegible] permit. Then a napkin [illegible] duty as a gag, and [illegible] in place, it rendered the prisoner voiceless.

The promoter picked up the Head of Adam and was ready to go. With his help Clara passed out of the window, and when he had followed they moved away from the house.

"Really, Mr. Dudley, that was beautifully done!" she exclaimed.

"I was just wondering what the legal penalty was for breaking and entering, with assault of the person, but I fail to remember. When I have served my time in prison I intend to reform."

"But I shall not!" she cried with a laugh. "Why, I've never enjoyed myself so much in my life. Reform? My inclinations that way are not perceptible. Success never made Dick Turpin sad. Why should I fall into gloom after such a delightful victory?"

Dudley shook his head, but realized that she did not comprehend the serious nature of their adventure. Being a friend of the Otis Small family, it did not seem so very wrong to go there for her own property, but the attack on Jerimore would take on new color when the excitement of it had passed.

For his own part, he cherished no pride in the affair as a whole, but found solace in the knowledge that he was seeking to clear his reputation of another charge, and even more comfort in the substantial feeling of the object he carried under his arm.

It was the Rembrandt, and it seemed to be a mute friend that would dominate the future. If he had acquired it unlawfully, the step was partly excused by the fact that its rightful owner was walking by his side, but it was a different feature that persisted in giving him a gleam of triumph and joy.

The Head of Adam, being recovered, was almost like a certificate that his own record was clear.

Finding that their horses had not been disturbed, they mounted and rode to the highway, where she turned her animal.

"That's the wrong direction," said the promoter. "It would take us to the ocean."

"We must throw possible pursuers and certain suspicion off the track," she returned. "I have it all planned. Come!"

"But——"

"We have no time to waste. Come!"

She started briskly, and as he had no choice he followed. The fog was now so thick that it was almost like moving into utter blackness, and the way was to be seen only close at hand.

It was a mile to a possible road for home, barring the one being traveled, but they made it rapidly, finally coming near to Edmund Rodley's house. At a point where no trees interfered, Clara, still holding the lead, turned into the field, evaded certain inquiries from her

(Continued on Page 24.)

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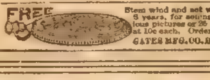

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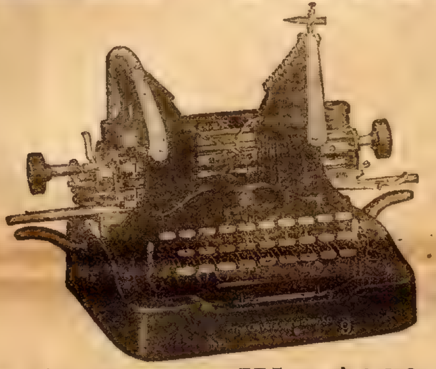

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Concluding

The Thirteenth Opal

By Irving Estes

Read This First

STANLEY FELLOWS, an American in the employ of a Mexican jewelry concern, after displaying a packet of twelve opals to a stranger, finds, when his customer departs, that there are thirteen jewels in the packet instead of the original twelve. He puts the thirteenth opal into his pocket, intending to take it to his employer, but the opportunity does not present itself until the end of the day. However, just previous to this, Nunez, a Mexican and his unknown enemy, reports him to his employer and he is discharged as a thief. On going for a walk, he encounters the stranger who is the cause of his dismissal. The stranger asks him to come to his house, offers him as much salary per week as Fellows has been getting a month, and when Fellows comes to his house explains what he wants him to do. Because he is looking for a man who has robbed his father, Fellows does not accept the man's proposition immediately, but promises to give his answer within two days. In walking along the streets facing the Alameda, Fellows finds an Indian woman abusing a child, and to divert her attention he buys some pottery. However, when the husband, a drunken Mexican, comes in she tells him that the child has lost some money thru robbery, and he immediately knocks the boy senseless. Fellows takes his part, and a fight ensues. The drunken Mexican is a cousin of Nunez, and forthwith becomes Fellows' enemy. The next day Fellows goes to look for the child and perhaps buy off the Mexican who has sheltered him, only to discover that he has disappeared. He goes to Limantour and finds that Nunez has preceded him with the story of the fight, which the mine-owner does not believe. Incidentally Nunez lets slip that his cousin has gone to Queretaro, where the mine is located. Immediately Fellows accepts his offer to take care of his mine there, and they leave for Queretaro, where Fellows is installed as manager of the mine.

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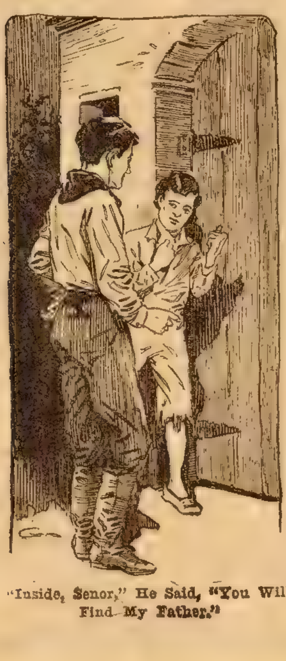
CHAPTER X.

THE SEARCH BEGINS.

A WEEK passed. From time to time Fellows came across the peculiarly brilliant opals he had been sent to trace to their source; usually, they were in the hands of venders; he tried to find out where they got them, but none would tell. He was convinced that by far the greater number of these apparently superior stones were being shipped direct to Mexico City. He did not give up, but the idea of finding any tangible clew concerning them seemed to grow more remote each passing day.



"Inside, Senor," He Said, "You Will Find My Father."

As for Yo Tambien, his search had been without avail. From the start he had realized that it was almost a forlorn hope; and yet, somehow, he felt that some day he would find some trace of the boy and his cruel keepers. Finally, he determined that he would take a long jaunt out in the country beyond the Sangremal. With this purpose in mind, he arose early one morning and started out. Not knowing whither his course might take him nor when he would return, he carried along a light blanket and food.

Almost at random, he chose the road leading out toward the Cerre de las Campanos, or Hill of the Bells. The sun was just peeping up over the horizon. Even at that early hour the natives were up and stirring. Indian women were molding pottery in front of little square adobe houses; dark-skinned maidens were at the wells drawing water.

On and on he walked, getting farther out in the rural regions he wished to explore. The sun rose higher in the heavens, but as yet he did not mind its warmth and glare.

He was traveling along a road ankle deep in dust, at either side a double row of great trees with branches like twisted cobras, the black shadows stenciling on the gray dust the tree forms above. In the middle distance, thru sylvan vistas, he caught glimpses of brown fields. In the dim blue beyond the dome and towers of a church. Long strings of burros passed by, heading for Queretaro, and loaded down with great bundles of green fodder; undulating masses of yellow dust drifted down the highway toward him, which hardened into droves of sheep as they passed.

Occasionally he met natives, already beginning to hug the intermittent shadows, as they journeyed toward the town, the women in flapping garments, with hair plaited, their little children slung to their backs; the men in zarapes and sandals, carrying crates on their shoulders packed with live poultry and cheap pottery. He wondered, perchance, if any of them could tell him anything regarding the whereabouts of that vanished cousin of Antonio Nunez, if he stopped them to inquire. The possibility was too remote for him even to make the attempt.

Still he hurried on and on.

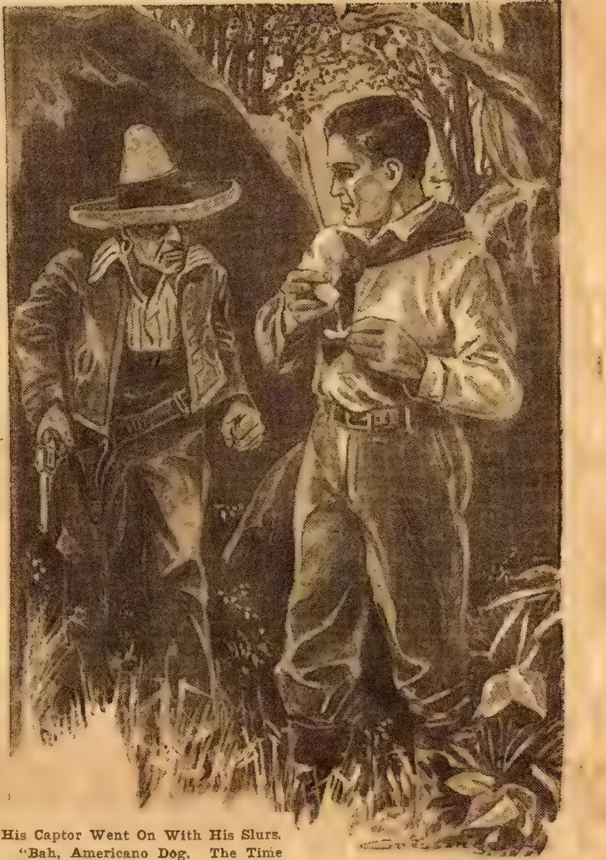
As the sun grew higher, he saw less signs of activity along the highway; and, an hour or so later, none at all. It was evident that the natives chose the early morning hours only either for work or traveling. In the distance now he could see an old mission, high on the mountainside. It seemed to float there in mid-air, a vision of beauty and dreams. Presently he came abreast of the rows of palms before the arched doorway. From the school rooms behind the gray-stone building came the voices of little children, droning like bees. Save for that sound, life seemed to sleep at the old mission, even as the mountains encircling the valley seemed to sleep now in their shrouding mist. He stood for a moment listening to the children; he found himself wondering if it could be possible little Yo Tambien had one time been among that group—in the days before he became "Yo Tambien;" in the days of loving parents who cared for him!

In the distance he could make out a low range of hills whose purple peaks the sun had now changed into pinnacles of gleaming gold. Choosing them for an ultimate goal, he started on down the dusty road again.

For hours he walked on and on with rapid strides. The sun, now high above, beat down upon him relentlessly. He knew that he must have covered a considerable distance; and yet those distant peaks appeared no nearer. In another hour their outlines were a trifle more distinct; but he realized now that because of the clear, rarefied atmosphere those enticing slopes had seemed nearer than they really were. Still, he did not give up hope of reaching them. He found a cool spot and sat down to eat a portion of his food; then, after a brief siesta, he was on his way again, determined to reach his objective, even tho he had to spend the night in the hills.

Once he passed close to an adobe hut and from the squalid inmates endeavored to learn something which might aid him in his quest. He was told that certain Indians from the vicinity went to Mexico City each year with pottery and toys. This encouraged him, for he felt that the woman in the booth had lied to him about her coming from the Guadalajara country. Further on, he came upon a lonely goat-herder, who gazed at him in astonishment, but from whom he finally gleaned the information that Indians who made pottery for sale in Mexico City lived in the hills ahead. Confident that at last he was on the right track of those he sought, he hurried on

Twilight was beginning to fall by the time he reached even the first gentle slopes. At the base of a huge bowlder he found a clear, crystal spring, and seating himself he took out the remainder of his lunch and ate it ravenously. The meal over, he began to realize that the day's exertions had worn him out; he arose and looked about him for some sheltered spot in which to take up his abode for the night, intending after a good rest to resume his search in the morning. He found a crevice in the side of the bowlder, into which he carried a pile of leafy branches for a bed. Then, throwing himself down upon the sweet-scented leaves, he sank at once into sound, dreamless slumber.



His Captor Went On With His Slurs. "Bah, Americano Dog. The Time He Come—He Come Right Now."

At the gray dusk of breaking day Fellows awoke. He threw aside the light blanket, which he was grateful he had brought along, for the night had been cold and chill. He was wide awake on the instant; he found himself wondering what it was that could have thus aroused him from sound slumber. He sat up, rubbed his eyes and looked around him. He had heard no sound that he knew of, and yet a strange feeling of uneasiness, a sense of some impending peril hung over him. He glanced up at the opening of the crevice above his head.

In the soft, gray light he beheld an evil face leering down upon him.

It grimaced at him covetously, gloatingly, with a cruel, sinister parting of the lips more horrible than a spoken threat—the dark, swarthy face of the Mexican with whom he had quarreled in the Alameda, the vengeful cousin of Antonio Nunez.

CHAPTER XI

THE ENEMY ATTACKS

FELLOWS reached stealthily for his revolver.

He found that it was still where he placed it, under the branches where his head had lain. He clutched it eagerly; never had the feel of its cold steel seemed so good to him before.

A low, mocking laugh came from above. The American looked at his weapon; a chill seized his heart. The cartridges had been removed while he slept!

His belt and hunting-knife likewise were gone; he was unarmed, helpless in the hands of the villain who had sworn to murder him should the opportune time arrive.

He jumped up. The head suddenly disappeared from above; the next second the bulky form of the Mexican blocked the entrance of the crevice. There he stood, revolver in hand, a wicked smile on his evil face.

"So! The American, he come see me, hey? Ver kind for him, ver kind—an' I sure glad see him!"

Fellows made no reply. He stood there coolly waiting, every nerve and faculty alert, awaiting events. The Mexican eyed him with deadly hatred, his rage and malignity increasing each moment.

"Senor Limantour want Americano manager, hey?" he sneered. "But he haf get new one now; you, gringo, no go back—never!"

Fellows remained silent. He took the "makings" from his pocket and began spreading the tobacco out upon the thin slip of paper. His captor went on with his jeering slurs: "Bah, Americano! You 'member what I say 'bout that 'ze-eep! ze-eep!', hey? That time he com—he com right now!"

He thrust his rage-distorted visage close up to Fellows; it was the opportunity the American wanted. With a sudden puff he sent the tobacco full in the other's eyes!

Shoving the cursing, half-blinded Mexican to one side, Fellows dashed out from the crevice, only to be set upon by four burly brigands who emerged suddenly from the bushes. The first of his attackers he toppled over with a right jolt to the jaw; the second, he grappled around the waist, hurling him back against the third, when they both went down in a heap. The fourth man, meanwhile, had jumped astride the American's back, clutching his throat with his long, swarthy fingers, with a well-defined idea of shutting off his wind. Falling over backwards, Fellows landed heavily upon this last antagonist, who promptly relinquished his throat-clutching activities and began making frantic efforts to free himself. Fellows jumped up. By this time the first two attackers were closing in upon him again; seizing a stout club from the ground, he began beating them back. The American, getting warmed up to his task, began to enjoy the work cut out for him; to glory and exult in the excellent showing he was making against odds. He felt that in another moment he would have the four completely routed. Then, just when he was going at top speed, his foot turned on a round stone and he fell. Before he could recover his balance his four assailants pounced down upon him. To their combined weight was added that of the weepy-eyed cousin of Antonio Nunez, who seeing the sudden turn in the tide of battle thought it a propitious moment to plunge headlong into the fray.

Despite his desperate struggles, they succeeded in binding him with stout rawhide thongs. Then lifting him roughly, they began carrying him off up the rugged slope. Higher and higher they went, the trail becoming steeper each moment, and their progress more slow and laborious.

At length they reached a long shelf of rock over-hanging a deep gully. Here they stopped, flinging him down upon the rocky surface of the shelf, where he lay helpless, bound hand and foot.

Fellows, tho bruised and numb, was doing some rapid thinking. He blamed himself now for not having taken greater precaution. How had this enemy of his chanced upon him? He concluded that Antonio Nunez was at the bottom of it; that somehow the disgruntled one had gotten word to his cousin that Fellows was in Queretaro; perhaps one, or both of them, had been shadowing and trailing him for days. Now that he was completely in their power, what course would they take in dealing with him? He had not long to wait to learn.

He noticed that his captors were preparing to depart; and that they moved with caution as they stalked grimly away. He looked around him, and he learned the reason for this. The shelf upon which he lay prostrate was literally covered with vipers—the deadly coralillos—more venomous even than the rattler!

They lay now with their glittering coral-covered bodies coiled, numb and inert from the cold, with only their hideous black heads raised.

So far, Fellows had been able to retain his nerve, and keep himself well in hand; the sight of the deadly vipers all around him caused him to utter an exclamation of horror he could not suppress. Tho the Mexicans were now well off the ledge, the leader of the gang heard the half-stifled groan of the captive; he turned around, and his loud, brutal laughter echoed among the crags.

"So you see dem, Americano dog!" he called back, tauntingly. "Soon the sun he come up over the ledge—he warm up snakes; den dees pretty coralillos dey crawl, crawl! Den soon dey strike—so—h-isst!"

Disappointed in not being able to wring any further evidence of anguish from the bound captive above him, he turned again to depart, with the last parting words: "Now, I go get senora; she glad see you too, ha! You no be lonely; you have plenty comp'ny! I soon com back. When coralillos dey all have der fun—den I finish like dis—ze-eep!" He drew his fingers across his throat significantly, then doffed his big sombrero. "Adois, senor; adois, senor dog!"

With his face resting within a few inches of a great, glittering viper, already showing signs of restless activity, they left him. He heard their footsteps rattling on down the slope, and the hoarse mingling of their voices. Fainter, fainter came the sound, gradually dying away in the distance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NEST OF VIPERS.

SUFFERING torment from the thongs which cut deep into his flesh, and from the mental agony of his frightful position, Fellows sank into a listless stupor; from this he was partially aroused by the bright rays of the sun beating into his eyes.

He glanced about him. The vipers were beginning to thaw out; they were slowly uncoiling and crawling about over the ledge.

The glistening monster near his face still remained coiled; but he had raised his cruel, flattened head; his bright, beady eyes were fastened upon those of the captive, while his forked tongue played in and out like darting red streaks. He wondered, vaguely, how long this torture would continue; how much time would elapse before the deadly fangs would sink into his flesh; how much longer he could endure this living death!

He could move his head but a few inches, yet from where he lay he could see far down the slope, and the narrow trail along which he had been carried. Ages, it seemed, had passed, since he made that short, painful journey.

Suddenly his heart gave a jump; some one was slowly, cautiously clambering up the steep pathway, now lost from view, now re-appearing again higher up, but ever keeping well within the shadow of the shrubbery at either side.

Hope returned. It could not be one of his enemies, or there would be no such caution to escape observation from below. Who could it be? Was he coming to aid him—would he come in time? A cold sweat broke out upon his brow. Then he closed his eyes and shuddered as he realized the futile folly of still hoping. Who could come? Who in all that bleak wilderness would want to save him?

He opened his eyes; then down the trail, but a short distance from his shelf of death, and standing there motionless as a statue he beheld—Yo Tambien!

Concealed in the bushes near the Mexicans, the boy had witnessed the fight and the capture of the American, the only human being that had shown him a kindness during these bitter years of his existence; the man of whom he had thought constantly since that fateful day in the Alameda; at whose shrine he had worshiped since, by day and by night, with all the fervid idolatry of his emotional nature! This man he had determined to save, even tho he knew detection meant death at the hands of the Mexicans; that his chance of escaping the fangs of the coralillos was a slim one, at best.

Fellows' brain was in a maddened whirl of conflicting emotion. At first he was thrilled with the joy of beholding the boy again—at the hope that he was to bring him succor. Then he thought of the deadly peril in which the child would be placed should he venture upon the shelf.

"Go back! Go back, Yo Tambien!" he screamed, hoarsely, "You must not come nearer!"

At the shout and reverberating echo, the nearest snake raised its head higher in the air, swaying angrily to and fro, hissing loudly close to Fellows' ear. Unmindful of the viper, thinking now only of the safety of the boy, he looked down over the ledge. Disregarding the command, Yo Tambien crept up closer to the shelving rock. He reached the edge. He could see the vipers now, glittering loops of coral, the poison from whose fangs meant death in the most horrible form within the hour!

Fellows wanted to shout out to him again; he dared not do so, for already the boy had thrown himself flat upon the ledge and was beginning to wriggle his perilous course toward the captive.

A sudden faintness came over the American. Was he to see the boy he sought to help and aid struck down before his eyes? Was the malignant influence—the curse of that dire, glittering thirteenth opal to terminate now in bringing death to them both?

He lay there in his mental torment, not daring to turn to look toward the lad; there was no sound by which he

(Continued on Page 20.)

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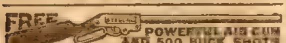

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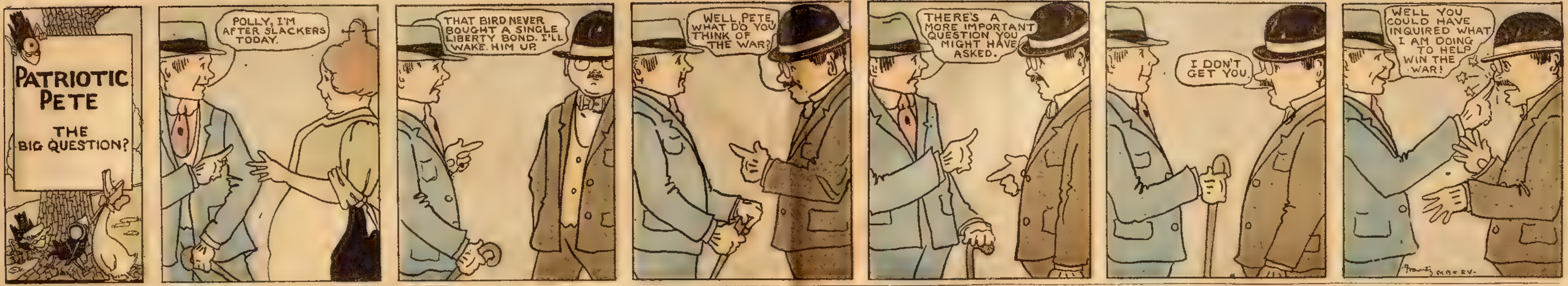

PATRIOTIC PETE
THE BIG QUESTION?
POLLY, I'M AFTER SLACKERS TODAY.
THAT BIRD NEVER BOUGHT A SINGLE LIBERTY BOND. I'LL WAKE HIM UP.
WELL PETE, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE WAR?
THERE'S A MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION YOU MIGHT HAVE ASKED.
I DON'T GET YOU.
WELL YOU COULD HAVE INQUIRED WHAT I AM DOING TO HELP WIN THE WAR!

Bound to Have His Joke.

"Jokes about the slowness of trains, especially here in the South," says an Atlanta railway man, "also tire me a bit by their ancientness; but I heard a new and good one not long ago.

"It seems that trains are always slow and far between on a branch line in Mississippi. Nobody knows this better than the people at the junction, except the people on the line itself. One day the newsdealer came to me grinning.

"'A fellow from the other end of the line just said a funny thing,' he remarked. 'He had missed his train and there wasn't another for two hours. He came to my stall to buy some reading matter to while away the time. He asked for a jokebook, and I didn't have any. Then he poked around for a while and said:

"'Well, I guess I'll take a time table instead.'"

Successful Method.

A woman of intellectual tastes found it difficult to remember all the facts she collected. She therefore secured the services of a professor of one of the best memory systems. Scarcely had the professor taken his departure after a successful first lesson when a loud double knock was heard at the front door.

"Who was that, Mary?" the lady inquired of the servant.

"Oh, if you please, ma'am," said Mary, "it was the memory man; he forgot his umbrella."

Have You Ever Noticed It?

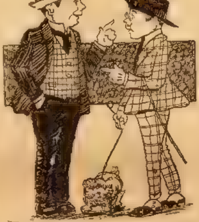
"My work," remarked the dentist, "is so painless that my patients often fall asleep in the chair while I am operating."

"H'm! That's nothing!" retorted his rival. "My patients nearly all insist on having their pictures taken while I am at work, in order to catch the expression of delight on their faces."

Alms in Secret.

"You must be crazy, Isabel. I've asked you repeatedly to be economical, and yet you go and order the most expensive fur coat in the shop."

"Well, I don't mind being economical but I do object to looking economical."—Life



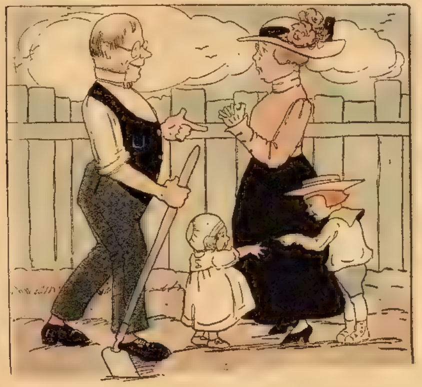
"I believe there is a plot against me."

"Somebody trying to make a man of you?"

A Regular Circus.

"What did you think of the dinner party last night?"

"It was the most daring bareback performance that I ever attended; and as for your niece, she outstripped all her competitors!"



The Lady—"Ah! Dear me! This sad war has taught us a lot, Professor."

The Prof—"You bet it has! I had degrees from seven universities—and didn't know how to plant a potato."

His Gift to the Bride.

A New England congressman who was visiting in the country called on a boyhood friend, now a justice of the peace. While chatting of old times a couple came in to be married. The justice performed the ceremony, and after accepting a modest fee handed the bride an umbrella.

The visitor observed the proceedings in solemn silence, and after the couple had made their exit he turned to his friend and asked:

"Do you always do that, Arthur?"

"Marry them? Oh, yes, if they have the license."

"No. I mean give the bride a present?"

"A present. Why, wasn't that her umbrella?"

"No," said the congressman peevishly, "it was mine."

Appearances Are Deceitful.

During the voyage of a great liner a wag was approached by a fellow passenger, who said:

"We are getting up a tug-of-war between a team of married men and a team of single men. You are married, aren't you?"

"No," replied the wag, "I am only seasick; that is what makes me look like this."

His Experience.

"My tailor is a genius."

"Then I don't think I'll have any dealings with him."

"Why not?"

"Every genius I know is strong for baggy clothes."

Worth Trying.

"I notice that young Mr. Flubdub kisses our parlor maid every time he calls. What would you do under such circumstances?"

"The hall is dark, girlie. Why don't you go to the door yourself?"

Double Trouble.

"There's an unfortunate woman over there."

"You mean that lady who is sneezing so much?"

"Yes; she's a grass widow with the hay fever."

Good Prospects.

Physician's Wife—"Are your affairs in bad shape, John?"

Physician—"Yes, but I hope to pull thru. My creditors have extended my papers to the middle of the watermelon season."

That Unhappy Expression.

"He looks to me like a man who had loved and lost."

"He looks to me more like a man who had loved and won."—Life

Appropriate Place.

"Where is this shipment of pig iron going?"

"I don't know, unless it is to Hog Island."

The Indications.

"Fish is brain food."

"Judging from that, I know some people who must live on a steady diet of gudgeons."

Suitable Attire.

"Why is Miss Prim wearing only half mourning for her brother?"

"Because he was only her half-brother, you know."

Good Advice.

"I feel like I am going all to pieces."

"Then try and pull yourself together."

A Blow.

"What's the matter with your wife? She seems all broken up lately."

"Well, she had a terrible shock."

"Why, what happened?"

"She was assisting at a rummage sale. She took off her new hat and somebody sold it for 30 cents."

Wooing the Cook.

Mrs. Sparks (dejectedly)—"Our cook is going to leave, Frank. She says the kitchenette isn't large enough to turn around in."

Mr. Sparks—"By George! I wonder if she'll stay if I install a turntable?"

Fifty-Fifty.

"How long have you been married, old man?"

"Long enough to pity bachelors. How long have you?"

"Long enough to envy them."

Of Course.

Mother—"What is the plural of man?"

Willie—"Men."

Mother—"And the plural of child?"

Willie—"Twins."

Mercenary.

"I think," said Senator Sorghum, "that I will go upon the lecture platform."

"Have you a message for the world?"

"Yes, I've got the message, all right, but I can't satisfy myself whether it is marked 'collect.'"

Geese and Gold.

"Why did the Kaiser teach us the goose step?" asked one German soldier.

"He thought he and Bertha Krupp had discovered a way to make the army lay golden eggs."

No Inducement.

"Look here, now, Harold," said a father to his little son who was naughty, "if you don't say your prayers you won't go to heaven."

"I don't want to go to heaven," sobbed the boy, "I want to go with you and mother."

Got a Jolt.

"Why don't you let Dr. Sawbones operate on you? He is considered very expert."

"Yes, I believed in him firmly until I saw him trying to carve a turkey around Christmas time."

A Hot One.

Mrs. A.—"That is a lovely gown, but haven't I seen it before?"

Mrs. B.—"No, I think not. I have only worn it at a very few smart affair this season."

Banded Together.

"We are forming a beefsteak club."

"What's the idea of a beefsteak club?"

"Why, we'll all club in occasionally and buy a beefsteak."

Anagram.

111—My first is in Dan but not in John.
My second is in Allies but not in Hun.
My third is in hunk but not in wop.
My fourth is in police but not in cop.
My fifth is in one but not in two.
My sixth is in old but not in new.
My seventh is in cable but not in gram,
My eighth is in pond but not in dam.
My ninth is in old but not in new,
My tenth is in one but not in two.
My eleventh is in noise but not in about,
My whole is the name of a pioneer scout.

Beheadings.

112—1. Behead something to sit on and leave that which covers animals; behead again and leave that which covers the earth.

2. Behead something to drink from and leave to be above.

3. Behead a part of the body and leave a conjunction.

4. Behead a hole in the ground containing water and leave 1¼ yards.

5. Behead a pronoun and leave a head covering; behead again and leave a preposition.

6. Behead determination and leave to be sick.

7. Behead something made when you hurt yourself and leave something mined.

Fractional Puzzle.

113—One-fourth of none plus one-third of ear plus one-third of won equals my first.

One-half of orgy plus one-half of leap plus one-third of Andrew plus one-half of as equals my last.

My whole is a large city in the South.

A Diamond.

114—

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1. A letter in bibliomaniac.
2. A vegetable.
3. Medicine made into small hard balls.
4. A country injured by the Germans.
5. A pro-German.
6. A heavenly body very important to us.
7. A letter in bibliomaniac.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

107. Transposition.

Once a, ocean, canoe, a cone.

108. Beheadings and Curtailings.

Paradise Lost.

1. India —Pen—sable.
2. Manuf—Act—ories.
3. Compa—Rat—ively.
4. Chrys —Ant—hemum.
5. Subor —Din—ation.
6. Scand —Ina—vians.
7. Assas —Sin—ation.
8. Medit —Err—anean.

9. Conso —Lid—ation.
10. Burnt —Off—ering.
11. Ambas—Sad—orial.
12. Unpre—Ten—tious.

109. Jumbled Sports.

1. Swimming. 2. Pole vaulting. 3. Baseball. 4. Football. 5. Canoeing. 6. Hurdling. 7. Golf. 8. Basketball. 9. Skating. 10. Hockey.

110. Word Building.

L, Al, pal, opal, copal.

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

He Did Not Know.

It was in an Indianapolis court a few weeks ago. A colored fellow was before the judge on a charge of bootlegging.

"Were you ever arrested before?" the judge asked.

"Yes, sir, once."

"How long were you in jail then?"

"I was not put in jail."

"How is it you were arrested and yet did not go to jail?"

"Well, I was fined $1 and costs and paid the costs."

"How much was that?"

"Eleven dollars."

"I suppose the judge got $5 and the rest went to the jury, didn't it?"

"I don't know, judge. I wasn't there when they divided it."

Political Cosmetics.

"Great Scott, Jonesey," said Wilkins, "that's a hefty bundle of papers you've got there. All campaign literature, I see."

"Yes," said Jonesey, "it's a bundle of political cosmetics for my wife."

"Political cosmetics!" cried Wilkins.

"Yep," said Jonesey, "she's in doubt as to her political complexion, and this stuff will help her to make up her mind."

Answered.

"Now, children," said the Sunday school teacher to the juvenile class, "can any of you tell me what an epistle is?"

"I can," answered a little fellow at the foot of the class. "An epistle is the wife of an apostle."

He Knew.

"Any animal with four legs," said the teacher, "is a quadruped, a man is a biped. Now can any one tell me what a zebra is?"

"Yes, miss," replied a small boy. "A 'striped.'"

No Chance for Cupid.

"How are her love letters?"

"Tame."

"How's that?"

"They are censored by her mother, her sister and two maiden aunts."

Conclusive Evidence.

Crawford—"How do you know our daughter and her young man haven't made up their quarrel yet?"

Mrs. Crawford—"Because the gas has been turned up high all the evening."

His Size.

"My wife asked me to bring home a head of cabbage."

"Yes, sir; large head or small head?"

"Oh, about 7¼," said the man absentmindedly.

The Motor Many Need.

"Why'd your mining scheme fall thru? Didn't you have a good promoter?"

"Yes. But what it needed was a good pulmotor."

A Precious Deposit.

Scene—London just after an air raid.

Young Mother (anxiously)—"Oh, constable, dare I venture to take baby out of the safe?"

Wife's Reply.

"You are an angel."

"I guess that's right. An angel has but one gown and for her the styles never change."

Military Courtesy.

New Colonel (seeing Scotch sentry)—"Who are you?"

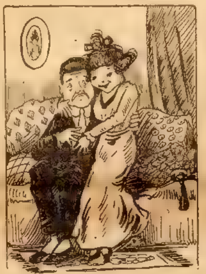
Sentry—"Fine, sir; an' hoo's yersel'?"

Good Place for Her.

Profiteer's Wife—"The girl who used to wash dishes has gone into a munition factory."

Profiteer—"Well, it can't be helped. How do you think she'll get on?"

Profiteer's Wife—"Oh, splendid. Her duty is to break iron things to fill shells for shrapnel."



Wife—"Woman's place is the home, dear—but mortgage it—I could be happy in a limousine with you!"

That's the Question.

She—"Anything that is worth winning is worth working for."

He—"Yes, but the question is, will your father loosen up, or will I have to keep on working for you after I've won you?"

Looking Forward.

He was a strikingly handsome figure in his uniform as he started out upon his round of farewell calls.

"And you'll think of me every single minute when you're in those stupid old trenches?" questioned the sweet young thing upon whom he first called.

He nodded emphatically. "Every minute."

"And you'll kiss my picture every night?"

"Twice a night," he vowed, rashly, patting the pretty head on his shoulder.

"And write me long, long letters?" she insisted.

"Every spare minute I have," he reassured her and hurried away to the next name on his list.

There were ten in all who received his promises.

When it was over he sighed. "I hope," he murmured, wearily, "there won't be much fighting to do 'over there.' I'm going to be so tremendously busy."

How Do They Do It?

A farmer went one day to buy a bushel of buckwheat for sowing. The man who sold the grain was away and his wife waited on the customer. She took a peck measure and they went to the granary. After filling the measure twice she poured the contents into the bag and began tying it.

"But," remonstrated the farmer, "it takes four pecks to make a bushel."

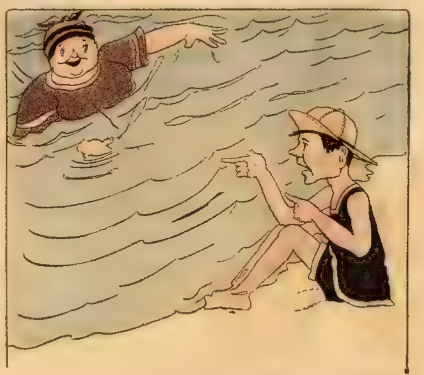
"Oh, does it?" returned the woman, untying the bag. "You see, I never had any experience in measuring grain before I was married. I always taught school."

Probably Her Honeybee.

Clara's Sister (at boarding school)—"Must be an insect Clara married instead of a man."

Girl Chum—"How so?"

Clara's Sister—"Why, in her letter to me, written right after the honeymoon, she says she got stung."



Chap on the Beach (who doesn't know such a thing as a tide exists)—Hey, there, you fat lumpus. You're splashing me all up. What do you want to do, drown me?"

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GENTLE JABS

A horse isn't any heavier when he is led.

Never judge a maxim by the man who repeats it.

Every time you wrong your neighbor you harm yourself.

If the master is neglectful the servant will not be diligent.

By his own conduct every man in the world fixes his own value.

The poet paints with words and the advertiser speaks with type.

Be very careful how you let remarks fall—they may hurt a friend.

Only a good brass band can play all the airs the drum major puts on.

If a man's first love is himself, he never finds a satisfactory successor.

A man can make his wife believe almost anything —during his courtship.

Opportunity and vacant lots must be improved to make them profitable.

Most men would rather get the short end of an argument than keep quiet.

A man's true friends keep quiet when some one is enumerating his virtues.

A great deal of shocking language is due to the receipt of C. O. D. telegrams.

A man is never in love with a woman until he begins to tell her his troubles.

If a man doesn't know when he is well off some of his fool friends will tell him.

A prudent man never butts into danger for the purpose of advertising his bravery.

Tho the wagon tongue is silent, it always gets there ahead of the rest of the outfit.

The worst thing about the skeleton in the family closet is that it refuses to remain there.

Egotists are men who are unable to disguise the fact that they are pleased with themselves.

Any man who is continually making a fool of himself must be a natural born tautologist.

The fool shows his folly and knows it not, but the wise guy knows his folly and shows it not.

It sometimes happens that a married man has a great deal to say, but his wife won't let him say it.

The older a man gets the less time he has to learn the things he thought he knew when he was a boy.

Lots of men spend half of their time complaining of life's brevity and the other half in trying to kill time.

An average woman doesn't care anything about the silver lining of clouds if only her own gown is silk lined.

It is almost as difficult for some women to get their hats on in the evening as it is for the men to get theirs on in the morning.

THE EDITOR HAS HIS SAY

SEVERAL new features make their bow in the Ledger this week. On another page you will find the first of what we hope will be a series of interesting contests for which we are offering cash prizes. The winners, it is hoped, will invest the money in some form of war savings. On this page we are running a column of funny things which appear in papers, and readers are invited to submit similar things which appear in print in their home towns. No prizes are offered for this department. Miss Winifred Grey this week is added to the Ledger staff in the role of Cupid's aid and will answer questions which are asked of her by Ledger readers. Those who desire are asked to take full advantage of these features and help us to make them popular additions to the Ledger.

IT WILL be remembered that a week or two ago the editor talked to you on those who stand still and told why the Ledger was changing its kind of fiction in an effort to keep up with the times. A reader in the State of New York wrote us about this. He says: "That old proverb about silence is all right sometimes and sometimes it sounds funny. Being a mere critic of literature is far removed from my line of work and I trust you will forgive me for taking a jump at a possible wrong conclusion. I have just read your excellent editorial on keeping up with the times, and I know that must be just as vital to you as it is to every other wide-awake business. In the language which we dare use to our friends, 'I'm sore' that that person who was kicking to you about having the characters in your stories live in the present didn't live when there were no furnaces, telephones or postage stamps. I will say that a story with an old setting is very good at times and relieves the monotony, but I'll bet you a good cigar that three-fourths of the Ledger readers would rather have the action and people who live now than eighty years ago. I hate like the deuce to have a man in a story do something I thought I couldn't do or have something happen him that couldn't happen me. The whole joy I get from a story is putting myself in the actor's place. To illustrate: In your ripping good story, 'In the Were-Wolf's Claws,' I tried to imagine how I would feel if I had been in Swanson's place, waiting in the dark and watching the unknown thing creep toward me. If I had had to imagine having an old musket instead of a rifle and wearing knee breeches instead of the kind that have to be pressed, it would have been spoiled and I wouldn't have been able to be Swanson. Understand me? While I am still here on that story I must tell you that I am terribly suspicious about those Chinamen who are living too quietly. For farmers, I don't like the looks of their well manicured nails and the way they do business. If they turn out to be all right, I won't forget that I owe you a smoke. [You win.—The Editor.] The Ledger is a new magazine at our home, but it receives more attention than any of the others, and one of the slighted ones costs three times as much a year as the Ledger does! I don't see how you can improve very much, so just keep up your good work. I suppose, however, you do get a knock once in a while. There are some stories that I don't care very much about, but just because there is celery on the table I don't have to eat it. Maybe some one else will. In other words, you always have something interesting for everybody. Please pardon me for taking so much of your time, but I wanted you to know that I am one of the thousands of over-satisfied readers. Considering the times, I can't quite see how you haven't raised your price. Is it because you're old-fashioned, or is it because you believe in suffering along with your people and not shifting the load?"

THANKS very much for your kind words. We hope that you will continue to like the Ledger. Next week we are going to start a three-part story entitled, "When Fate Decides," written by a former member of the editorial staff of the W. D. Boyce Company. Very, very seldom does the editor publish a fiction story written by any one connected with the Ledger. Most editors fear that their liking for a fellow worker may influence their decision on whether a story is good or not. In this case the author was on his way to join the Army. He left the story under an assumed name on the editor's desk and the acceptance went out under that name. The editor was as much surprised as any one when he discovered the author's real identity, but he stands by his first decision that "When Fate Decides" is a good yarn.

THE story deals with an American adventurer who robs the gold trains in the hot lands, a short part of the year, and spends the rest of it in leisure in Vera Cruz, where the foreign colonies and the Mexican officials speculate on his mysterious comings and goings. His partner, a Spaniard, becomes infatuated with an American heiress who has come to Mexico on her father's yacht. This partner carries the girl off to the desert, and is killed by the rurales who pursue him. Rodney, the American adventurer, then carries her to safety. She falls in love with him, and is reluctant to go back to Vera Cruz. However, Rodney knows that in Vera Cruz there is another woman, a Spanish dancer, and—the story starts next week

The Editor.

FROM YOUR HOME TOWN

What's in a Name?

George Honest of Oakley, Kan., has been arrested for hoarding food.

The Perfect Hooverizer.

For food administrator we beg to nominate Mr. Meeno Eten of Emden, Ill.

How Large Is She?

Miss Beryl Clump of Terril, Iowa, writes girlishly for pattern 1468, 38 bust.

Ought to Make a Good Chief.

It may interest you to know that Captain Pyrene is chief of the fire department at Nitro, W. Va.

Haunted House?

Wanted—Woman to do housework. No one in family but herself. Phone 2677-W.—Ottumwa Courier.

Come Seven, Come Eleven.

In St. Joseph, Mo., they have arrested a man named Charles Pairodice on a charge of conducting a crap game.

Save the Sugar.

Put only one lump of sugar in your coffee and stir like hell. We don't mind the noise.—From an Arizona restaurant sign.

Good (in a Manner of Speaking) Night!

Miss Twilight and Daun Hess of South Main street have gone to Warren to visit their grandmother.—Auburn (Ind.) Evening Star.

In a Bone-dry State, Too!

At the Michigan State fair last week a woman asked the attendant of some prize-winning sheep if moths bothered the animals very much.

Was He Eating Onions?

"He asked for instructions as to how the salute should be made, and going to his knees he killed the flag reverently."—Mattoon, Ill., Commercial-Star.

The 78th Up to Scratch.

Ever since the A. E. F. roster came out I have been itching to call attention to the fact that the chief of staff of the 78th division is Lieut. Col. Harry N. Cootes.—S. C. M.

An Ideal Site for a Picnic.

The employes of the Egan Construction Company are making plans for a big picnic to be held next Sunday at the sewer purification plant near Jackson's spring. The site is ideal for a picnic.—West Chicago Press.

100% Patriot.

Our notion of a complete patriot is Professor Lamont, clairvoyant, of Colorado Springs, who advertises in the Gazette: "From patriotic motives I am retiring from the practice of clairvoyancy, to give all my attention to my oil interests."

Cheering the Departed One.

Leonard South left Saturday for Camp Pike to work at the carpenter's trade, but any of us don't expect to see old Len come back to Rocky Hill again; he will be killed before he gets back.—Rocky Hill Correspondent of the Leslie (Ark.) Herald.

Have Some of the Neck?

The Ladies' Aid of the Second Baptist Church will give their first entertainment on Tuesday night, Sept. 10, consisting of chicken and refreshments. Come one, come all, and help in this great titanic struggle. Rev. J. W. Tutt, pastor.—Macomb (Ill.) Journal.

Discovered!

My four years of hard study of science has startling discoveries of direct military value and economy. Galileo invented the pendulum, Newton discovered the law of gravitation, and now I have discovered the way to win the war in six months if you elect me sheriff, and you will do so if you want to save the lives of your boys. A. P. Brady.—Streator, Ill., Independent-Times.

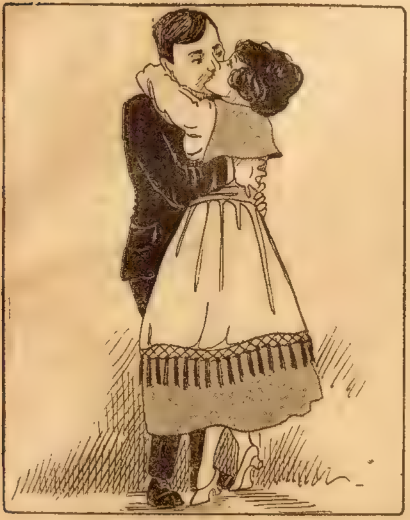
This Joke Was Free.

We don't buy jokes for the Ledger, but here is a letter that didn't cost us anything:

"Dear Sir: I have enjoyed reading your paper sometimes so much sometimes that I am going to relate a composition of my own which was too deep for the editor of Life, who sent it back. A slacker without a job said to the judge: 'Judge, why am I like a nickel on a street car?' The judge said, pleasantly: 'Thirty days; I don't know; why?' 'Because,' said the hobo, 'I am a low-fare.' If you say it quick it sounds like loafer; that's the joke. You may print it without cost."

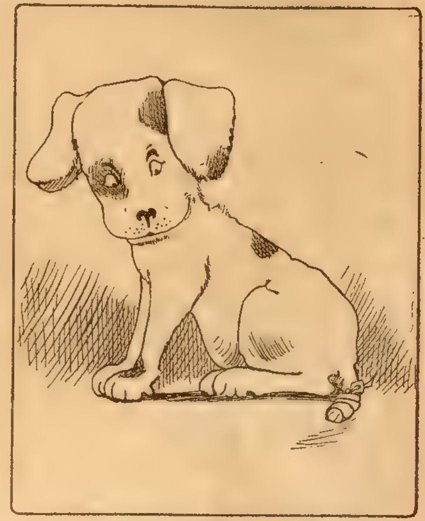
WHAT TITLE WILL FIT BOTH THESE PICTURES?

For the Three Best Answers the Ledger Will Pay



FIVE DOLLARS EACH

HOW nimble is your wit? To find out and just for fun the Ledger this week offers you a prize contest. Many of you should be able to find a title that will apply to both pictures. The words in the title must be pronounced alike when applied to each picture, altho the spelling may be different. For the three titles which in the judgment of the editor are best, prizes of $5 each will be paid. In the event of a tie, duplicate prizes will be given. All titles must be in the editor's office by November 1. The prize-winning titles will be announced in the issue of November 16. Do not write a letter to accompany the title you submit. Simply write on a plain sheet of paper the title you think most appropriate, and underneath it your name and address and mail it to Title Contest Editor, Chicago Ledger, 500-514 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.



YOUR TROUBLES OF THE HEART SOLVED HERE

Conducted by Winifred Grey

Do you want to confide in some one and ask advice? Miss Grey will undertake to help you solve your problems. Address her in care of the Ledger's Editor.

She Will Return.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I have a girl chum, and since last year she has been keeping company with a boy two years older than we are. I never see her any more, and I like her company. Every time I make an appointment with her she accepts, then disappoints me.
VIOLET M.

Never mind about her. She will come back to you soon enough, bursting with confidences about her new beau. Just take it lightly, my dear. Remember that new beaux are very interesting, but then I'm quite sure she'll have to tell somebody about this one, and rest assured, it will be you.

Too Young.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am a girl of 15, in love with a boy three years my senior. His friend is just my age, and he gets angry at me whenever I talk to his older friend. What should I do? What time should I go home from a party? Am I too young to go to a show and boat riding with a boy? Is it wrong to kiss a boy good-night?
MAISIE K.

You're far too young for beaux, and your mother ought to keep you home nights. You should be home from a party by 10:30. You're altogether too young to go to shows with boys, and, as for kissing them, it's wrong, and you know it.

Is He Worthy?

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am deeply in love with a man and he with me, but about a year ago we broke up and I haven't heard from him since. One of my girl friends told some falsehoods about me and we quarreled. Lately he found out that it was all a lie, and now he is trying to make up. Should I take him back?
BROKEN-HEARTED ELEANOR.

It's hard for a stranger to advise in a case like that, but it seems to me that he might have trusted you more, and at least made sure that he was right before he even broached the subject of his conversation with the other girl to you. However, if you love him, you will no doubt take him back. Perhaps this lesson will be a good one and he will not listen to baseless stories again, much less believe them.

About Shaking Hands.

DEAR MISS GREY:
How should one go about introducing a girl and boy friend to one another? What should one say? Is it proper to shake hands with the person to whom one is introduced?
BETTY T.

Some people do not think it proper to shake hands upon being introduced, but personally I see nothing objectionable in it. In introducing one girl to another say, "Miss So-and-So, meet Miss So-and-So," or "Miss X, allow me to introduce my friend, Miss Y." Never introduce a girl to a boy. Always introduce the boy to the girl, as "Miss X, allow me to present my friend, Mr. Y." The idea of this is that he is brought into her presence, and not that she is presented to him.

Marry After the War.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am a young girl of 18, in love with a man three years my senior. He has been called in the draft and expects to leave for the training camp almost any day. We have been going together more than a year, and now he is urging me to marry him. Don't you think I had better wait until the war is over and he comes back before I take such a step? Please tell me what to do?
H. L. K.

By all means wait until the war is over, and then make sure you are marrying the young man because you love him, and not because he is urging you to.

Talk to Your Parents.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am a girl of 21, in love with a man of 21. We have known each other for several years, and he has asked me to go out with him a number of times, but I have refused. When he asked, some time ago, I told him frankly that it was because my parents did not like him. Since this I have not seen him. I know he is angry. What should I do.
D. L.

It's pretty hard to do anything now. In the first place, you should not have hurt his feelings by telling him outright what your parents thought. You might have spared his feelings by saying that your parents did not approve of your going around with young men, and then you might have tried to persuade your parents to accept the young man. Unless their objection to him is well founded, there is no reason why time and patience will not help you. Before you do anything to renew your association with the young man, why not find out first what your parents do not like in him? If their objection is a good one, best let the matter drop.

Perfectly Proper.

DEAR MISS GREY:
Is it perfectly proper for me to hang a service flag in my window for a nephew who has gone to war? He did not leave from my house to go to the Army.
A LOVING AUNT.

Certainly, you may hang a service flag in your window. They indicate that a near relative has gone to fight, and it makes no difference whether he has gone from your house or not.

Act Natural.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am a young girl of 20 and care a great deal for a young man who lives next door. We see each other almost every evening, but he never asks me to go out with him; but then, he never goes out himself, either. How can I find out if he cares for me?
SUE.

Just act natural, Sue. Do not try to force matters. If this young man cares for you, it won't take him long to tell you about it. If he doesn't, try to remember that there are plenty of other young men equally interesting.

Marrying Under Age.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am a young man of 20, in love with a girl of my own age. We want to get married. Will I have to say I am 21 in order to get a license?
JOE K.

If you are under 21, you must have your parents' or guardians' consent to your marriage. If they grant it, merely say so to the clerk when you apply for a license. Don't do anything rash or underhanded, son.

May Be Self-conscious.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am 18 years old and in love with a boy of my age. When we are alone he pays me marked attention, but when my girl friend is there he hardly notices me and talks to her all the time. Is he trying to tease me or make me jealous?
G. R.

Don't take those matters too seriously, my dear. You are far too young to break your heart over a boy. Perhaps, after all, he is self-conscious and takes this method of hiding his love in front of a third party. Boys sometimes do that, you know.

Don't Be Hasty.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am in love with a young girl whose age is 17, the same as mine. I have been going with her about three months and have treated her nicely. The other night I saw her out with another young fellow. She claims she loves me. Should I drop her?
DICK.

My dear boy, before you quarrel with your sweetheart, ask her about this other man. What's more, don't think that you are whole-heartedly in love yet. You are too young to make life pledges, and it is just as well that both you and the girl should have other friends. If your love is true, it will endure.

No Reason to Refuse Consent.

DEAR MISS GREY:
Some few months ago I invited a group of soldiers to my home to make things pleasant for them. One of them came to be very much interested in my daughter, who is 17. A few days ago he came to me and asked my consent to their engagement. I know the kind of a family that the young man comes from, and I know he is as good a son-in-law as I could wish for. However, since he is going away, I do not know what to do. They won't be married until after the war, but they wish to become engaged. Please advise me.
ANXIOUS MOTHER.

Why should you refuse your consent to their engagement? If, as you say, you know that the young man is worthy in every respect, and the young couple do not expect to be married before the war is over, there is nothing that should stand in your way. In fact, what difference does it make, actually, whether you give your consent or not? The young people will carry around in their minds the thought that they belong to each other. All they are asking of you is formal recognition of this, and you might just as well give it.

Foolish Girl.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am 29 years old, in love with a girl four years my junior. I have known her about four years, and recently I asked her to marry me. She refused on the ground that she is lame, saying that she did not believe that lame people should marry. I am disappointed and broken-hearted. If she were to marry me she could have everything any woman could wish for, since I am well off, own property and an auto. What can I do to persuade her to change her mind?
TED B.

The lady is very foolish to refuse you. She should be glad that you care for her in spite of her affliction. If she cares for you and does not marry you because of her lameness, she is making the mistake of her life. Perhaps if you will show her this letter it may help.

Yes, Give It to Him.

DEAR MISS GREY:
I am 18 and have kept company for the last year with a young man about two years older than myself. Recently I broke with him, because I could not learn to love him. Since then he has asked for my picture, and says he will give me his in return. Would it matter if I were to let him have my picture?
BROWN HAIR.

I don't think so.

Jane Plays the Game

(Continued From Page 8)

moments after she had disappeared within the house. Within an incredibly short time she came out, fully dressed in a smart little smock dress. She had on a wide, floppy hat, and in one hand she carried a salt shaker, in the other a basket containing the remainder of the pretty salad she had made for Hal's expected visit. She looked so very happy that Hal began to doubt if the ladder episode had not existed mostly in his imagination.

"Let me carry the basket," he urged.

"You're likely to eat it up. I won't let you."

"What's in it?" She allowed him a little peep.

"Oh, say! But I like that kind with little red tomatoes.'

"I remembered that you did." He couldn't see her face without getting down and looking under her hat brim. That is the trouble with your little girls—so much goes on beneath their bonnets that you have to miss.

"Let's hurry real fast. Let's run races all the way there so they won't have to wait and get hungry."

"I'm not in a hurry. And anyway, I'm awfully warm and tired." Hal shrugged his shoulders.

The big hat tilted up and Jane laughed. "I'm going to run. You can do as you choose." She ran, and he had to sprint to keep up.

As she paused a moment, climbing over a fence into a field, he asked, "Are you so anxious to get there with the rest of them?"

"Yes. I'm afraid Miss Storrey will get lonesome." She meant to tease him a bit.

"She has taken quite a notion to you, Jane. I hope you will be with her when you can—she needs a little tonic like you to cheer her up."

"Jane's a little pill, Jane's a little pill,
A little dose of little me will either cure or kill."

"Really, tho, Jane," Hal ignored the interruption.

"She collects butterflies." Jane added what praise she could.

"She told me that you got one for her this morning—that was what you were doing when you got nearly drowned. You ought to be careful. I'd feel awful —if—if anything happened to you."

"I didn't fall in, Hal; I waded, and I wasn't after the butterfly. I got it afterward."

"Well, she thinks you're a—brick. Both of us do. You know, Jane, she used to be a kind of a cynic. Never said any prayers, and thought people always did things for the money they got out of them. But she's been a good deal different lately, and I think if she knows how you feel about it all, it will help a lot."

"I've been trying my best to be nice to her. Hal!" Jane gulped hard. If Hal was trying to reform her rival, he was done for. She would get him.

"She has a mighty good heart," Hal pursued, and added, a bit wistfully, "When she loves a man it is for all the time, and not by fits and starts."

Without a word, but feeling her own little heart sick and cold, she began to run recklessly across the field, and Hal did not see below the hat brim again during the rest of the way.

Is it bad luck, as they say, to go back for things when once you have started? Certainly Hal's trip for Jane and the salt had hoodooed the party. When they arrived they saw Cecilia nursing a swelling cheek, and there were tears of pain in her round blue eyes. It was a hornet that did it, her sister explained, as also round-eyed and pitying she prepared a cool gob of brown mud for a poultice. Mr. Parkes unwittingly sat down on a pan of baked beans, and altho he was subsequently gay and cheerful his eyes had a look of subconscious regret and anxiety concerning his best duck trousers, and he firmly and humorously declared that he always liked to stand up to eat at a picnic, as the viands went down with greater dispatch. Jane would not take off her hat, as her hair was tumbled. Shielded in its covert, she was as active and noisy as ever.

She passed out half of her wieners for roasting, hopping on the right foot, and the rest, hopping on the left, calling them bacon.

"We send the real bacon to the brown boys. Why, we would eat cat-and-mice substitutes to bring the little fellers back safe from France after they have fought their good fight."

Lulu Storrey's eyes filled with tears and she said feelingly, "That's what we would, Jane!" Then she looked at Hal, and smiled her queer smile. Jane saw them smile back understandingly, and she [illegible] broke off the top of an olive jar with a sharp little stone.

"Lots of grasshoppers, this year," she remarked irrelevantly. "They're supposed to be green, but they're mostly [illegible] supposed to be gray, but I'm mostly green." She gave a shaky little laugh.

Hal was looking at her across the little camp fire; so was the Storrey girl. Both of their mouths spread good-humoredly. Then again they looked at each other with complete understanding. Lulu chuckled aloud, and putting her hand on Hal's arm, she gave him a little shake and they laughed again.

"Oh, you're too funny, Jane," Miss Storrey exclaimed in pure enjoyment.

Jane said nothing, but she opened another can of beans, with a big knife, not even looking for the can-opener.

"Miss Jane, do you think you are ever going to fall in love?" Mr. Parkes asked facetiously from his station where he leaned, somewhat in papoose fashion, against a tree.

"No, Mr. Parkes, never." Jane was in dead earnest. "I am going to have a career and live my own life."

"Nonsense, dear," Miss Storrey burst out impetuously. "There can't be any real happiness for a girl until she has given her heart to a good man who loves her. Oh, I know that, at least, is very true."

The faces of the other girls sitting about the fire softened. Mabel's gentle eyes looked beyond Mr. Parkes' well-formed head into some far distance. Even little Cecilia forgot the lump the hornet's attack and its cure had left on her face, and a soulful expression filled the remaining portion of her countenance.

Jane had no Charley to fall back upon. She merely stayed under her hat. As self appointed servitor, she announced that she would serve "Murphy salad," and performed a jig after each serving until the hungry diner would laugh to suit her fancy. She set nearly every one in a good humor again.

"Sirrah, beg for your portion!" she declaimed to Hal as he sat very silently indeed. He turned his head toward her, then suddenly rose to his knees and took her free hand with ostentatious solemnity.

"O, Lady of Spuds! O, dealer in onions! Grant a morsel to a starving beggar!" Then before she knew what he was doing he kissed her hand. A moment later he was wiping his mouth and was peering suspiciously under the shadow of her hat.

"Serves you right," she taunted. "I —I put olive juice on the backs of my hands to—to keep the mosquitoes off,' she explained hastily, and walked away.

"Where are you going?" Eulalia called anxiously.

"Over into the woods. I'm sort of ill."

"Oh," cried all of them, alarmed and sympathetic, rising hurriedly.

Jane pulled off her hat and threw it down in front of her. "I don't want any help. I don't like to have people around—when I'm sick at my stomach." She turned on her heel and with a firm tread disappeared among the trees and tall vines of the forest. And no one followed her.

It was getting toward twilight, and Jane's malady seemed not to have left her as yet. The rest of the party sat uncomfortably but pluckily determined to be cheerful about the red embers. Mr. Parkes entertained them with a reading purporting to be a dialog between a Jew and an Irishman. The text had a charming impromptu flavor, and the Irishman would have been registered at any police station as an enemy alien, judging from his brogue. Mabel sang a plaintive little ballad, and Eulalia told funny things the children had said. Hal spoke not a word, tho he laughed mechanically at the witticisms of the ingenious Parkes

"I've got to be going," Eulalia said at last. "I have to put the kids to bed pretty early," Everybody rose with some physical stiffness, but agile willingness.

"I'm worried about Jane." Cecilia looked very solemn but ludicrous with her puffed face.

"I'd better go and see if there is anything I can do for her," Mabel offered, generously resigning the other side of Mr. Parkes.

"No, I'll wait for her," Hal said shortly. "I haven't anything else to do. The rest of you may as well go on." Miss Storrey gave him a long, sympathetic glance and walked away behind the others.

As soon as they were out of sight he started in the direction that Jane had gone.

"Jane!" he called hoarsely. "Jane! Where are you?"

There was no answer. He peered about on the ground that shone red with the afterglow. She might have gone on thru the woods and home, but it was unlikely if she was really sick. He had his doubts.

He called again. The uneasy chirp of some little bird near at hand sounded thru the trees. He looked for the little complainer, and it flew from a thicket to his right, up into a scraggy tree before him. His eyes followed it. A bit of white caught his eye. It was slowly retreating upward. He stepped nearer the body of the tree and looked up. A pair of resentful eyes in the

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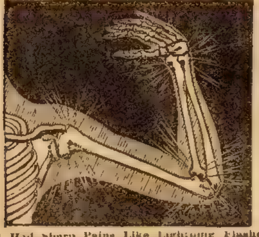

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shadow fixed upon him unsmilingly.

"Jane, what on earth are you up to? Come down out of that." No move.

"Then I'm coming up to bring you down." A wild grapevine showed him how she had gained the branches. Up he went.

"I'm coming down," piped a thin voice. As they met, a few branches up, Jane sidestepped and attempted to swing past him. In a moment she would have escaped. Some good imp prompted Hal to reach for the leather belt of her smock as she slid downward A gentle pull and a tweak and the deed was done. The belt caught firmly over a short bough that had at some time been broken off jaggedly.

Jane's descent stopped. Her feet slipped off the branch where they had found a footing. She gave a little startled cry, and dangled, frightened.

"Oh, Hal! I'm being hanged!" she gasped. "Help me off, oh please help me off, Hal!" He felt like a villain but he remained firm.

"Are you in pain?" he asked solemnly, as he took time to prepare a good footing for himself directly below and in front of her. Then he guided her feet back to the branch from which they had slipped.

"No," she admitted uneasily. "But I want to get down. Let me down!"

"What for?"

"Hal, please let me down!"

"Would you run away from me then and begin swinging on things again?"

She swallowed hard and the dumb misery in her eyes looked thru him as if he were not there at all.

"You don't like me very well, I guess. Not even as much as you used to."

Here she was, cornered, with no Charley, no hat, no room to do stunts. She was helpless.

"Yes, a whole lot, I do if you must know it," she said bitterly

"You don't act as if you did But, Jane—I can't stand it any longer. I love you—I want you so. I'd always kind of thought that some time we would marry each other. But now I come back and I can't get near you for kids and dogs and flying heels. You pound and whistle when I leave. At first I said to myself, 'It's the same old Jane.' But I soon knew better. You don't really care, or you wouldn't act the way you do."

Jane's eyes flashed. "That's the way it goes! And if I acted as if I cared you would laugh at me and call me a silly. Do you suppose I like not getting a single letter for months, that I go out and swing on things because I am so glad? Do you think I whistle and pound for joy on the chicken house, because you see me wearing horrid old overalls and a middy that might have belonged to Bluebeard, and go away being called fancy Italian names? It isn't nice to tell you all this, but I almost broke my heart trying to be funny at the picnic. Hal, that wasn't olive juice on the back of my hand—it was tears. I forgot my handkerchief. Now, I'm straight with you. I hope you'll forgive me for lying to you. I want to get down now."

"Here's my handkerchief, Jane." She took it haughtily but gratefully. He broke off the branch that held her belt and made room for her to descend. He was less sure than ever just how matters stood—whether she still harbored that crazy idea about a career, a fearful word to lovers, whether he was dismissed or encouraged. He had never broached such a subject before and had no guideposts to go by. He was relieved to see that she did not run away as he reached the ground beside her.

"Now I'm a person again," she said, "since I'm standing on the ground. I don't like to have to talk when I'm hanging up. Something in me is short circuited."

"I was a beastly bully to keep you up there," Hal repented. "I'm sorry. I won't ever tie you up that way again."

"That's all right, Hal," she said quickly. "Forget it." She hesitated before she looked up with wistful, unafraid eyes. "Did you mean what you said up there, about—liking people?"

"Yes, Jane, I meant every word of it."

"I meant every word of what I said, too," she affirmed, so earnestly that Hal was afraid she was angry and his doom was sealed. He was at a loss what to do. But one thing there was which might not be distasteful to her, and would give a bit of extra time to think wisely

"Come, Jane, it isn't quite dark yet. Let's take a ramble and get things straightened out. It's our last chance. I have to move on tomorrow."

She shook her head and approached him shyly. She put up her little brown hands that were used to hanging onto things and placed them on his shoulders.

"Hal, dear, if both of us get into motion again, something awful will be sure to happen. Let's stand still right here and settle it while we've got each other."

Tenderly, but almost experimentally, he put his arms around her. She did not duck or slide or make a dash for liberty. He took courage. It was nearly too good to be true.

"Jane, you do love me, don't you?" She folded her hands fervently on the back of his collar as he bent over to hear her answer. He had an agonizing desire to say the right thing just now. He had bungled things so far. From somewhere in his whirling brain came an inspiration, the echo of the voice of a lusty comrade who sang it on every [illegible] that he approached the overworked piano in a distant "Y" hut

"Jane, we'll go down the long, long trail together, won't we?" A queer little noise between a sob and a chuckle penetrated his heart thru his left coat pocket. He looked down anxiously on the tumbled coiffure that rested there. An apologetic eye appearing told him that it had been mostly chuckle

"Serves me right when you put it that way, Hal. I'll try not to do any more cartwheels and somersaults than I can help. I—I wish I were lots nicer than I am—for your sake. Oh, I do care so much!"

It was when they were walking homeward that Jane said with a happy little sigh, "I am so glad you didn't let that Miss Storrey get you. For just a little while I was afraid she would, she's so——"

"Miss Storrey—get me!" Hal looked thunderstruck. "Why, Jane, little girl, what are you talking about? Where did you dig up a crazy idea like that?"

"She ran around with you all the time, and talked over old times, and you were nicer to her than you were to me part of the time, she made jokes with you I didn't understand, and when we talked about soldiers she looked at you and cried right at you but I don't mind now. It's all right"

Hal stared at her incredulously. "Jane, don't you know about Lulu? Why, I thought everybody did. Don't you know she's engaged to Jack Hampton. Jack—my old roommate, you know; the one that used to visit here, that Charley was so dippy about—followed him around town and all that? Jack and I were in camp together down there, but he was sent to France a good while ago. Lulu, poor girl, is crazy about him—talks of him by the hour. He is in active service over there, and she is—worried about him, you know."

Jane's eyes filled with tears. "Oh, there I am again! And I have been thinking horrid things—almost hating her—oh, and Hal! You are on your way to—to go over, too!" She took his hand like a little child that is afraid in the dark.

They walked on in silence. "Hal?"

"Yes."

"I'm thinking I'll have to caper with Charley and swing on the apple tree a good deal while you're away from me, but I won't when you come back. Hal, please may—may I borrow your handkerchief again?"

* * *

The Girl—"My father says there is a movement on foot——"

The Youth (with visible alarm)—"I think I had better go."

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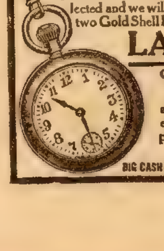

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BIG CASH COMMISSION TO AGENTS

The Thirteenth Opal.

(Continued From Page 13.)

could determine what progress the boy was making along the deadly course he had deliberately, willingly chosen.

Suddenly he felt something touching his hands behind him. First he thought it was one of the creeping coralillos; then, with a deft slashing of the rawhide, he knew that Yo Tambien had reached him; that, so far, the boy was safe; that for them both there still remained hope!

In a few seconds the boy's task was over. Slowly, cautiously he backed to the edge of the shelf, then dropped over to safety. For a brief interval Fellows remained motionless, too numb to move a muscle; then the blood began to circulate again, bringing strength to his limbs, and courage to his heart. Assured of his strength at length, he leaped to his feet, cleared the ledge with a spring, and landed in a heap at the feet of his rescuer. Yo Tambien, realizing that there was not a moment to lose, began a careful reconnoiter of their position, to determine the next move to be made.

Suddenly they heard the sound of voices and coarse laughter, and the shuffling of feet ascending the slope. The Mexican cousin of Antonio Nunez, the senora and the balance of the ruffian gang were returning to renew their gloating and exultation, to cheerfully administer the promised last blow.

Grasping Fellows by the hand. Yo Tambien darted into a narrow path leading off thru the shrubbery; in another moment, still hand in hand, they disappeared within the welcoming shadows of the forest.

CHAPTER XIII.
THE ESCAPE.

THEY had gone but a short distance when Fellows stopped abruptly.

"Yo Tambien," he said, "what is the name of that Mexican you've been living with?"

"Juan Lopez, senor; he is called 'Black Juan.'"

"He has a house near here?"

The boy nodded.

"You can find the way from here?"

"Yes, senor, but——"

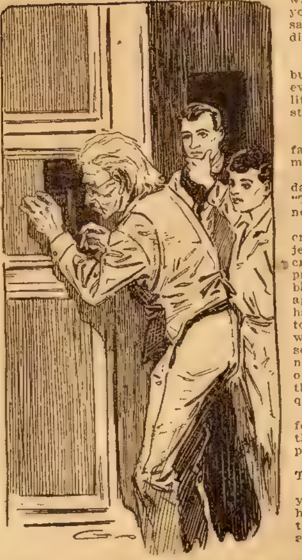
"We must go there at once; lead the way."

Yo Tambien stood motionless, his manner one of ardent hesitancy rather than importuning. Suddenly he broke forth: "Don't take me back to Black Juan, senor! They would beat me—kill me! Take me with you—anywhere; but not back to Black——"

"Listen, boy," Fellows broke in, kindly, "I'm not thinking of taking you to Juan Lopez; he'll never get his clutches on you again while I live——"

"Ah senor—thank you for that!"

"We will start out for Queretaro; but, keeping off the highway, our course will be long and tedious. We must have food; that I intend shall be furnished by that low-down greaser—Lopez—who has caused us both so much trouble. You lead the way, boy, and hurry; they will soon return madder'n hornets!"



He Pushed Back a Panel in the Wall.

They reached Juan's adobe hovel, secured a supply of food and gourd of water, and with a few of the boy's meager belongings, set off into the timber again.

It was nearly noon when they stopped for a bite to eat. As they ate, the boy confided to the American what he knew of his own unhappy life-history.

"I lived with my parents not far from Queretaro. My mother was very beautiful. She was kind to me; I loved her, senor. My father, I did not love. He was mean and cruel—not only to me, but to my poor little mother. Each year it got worse. At times he would drink much; then he would beat me, and tell us he would kill us both! My mother, fearing harm would come to me, decided that we would run away from my father. One night we stole away, while he was too drunk to know. For months we wandered here and there, living as best we could. My mother had relatives she wanted to go to; they lived a long way off. Our money was gone; we tried to make the journey by walking. I knew little of that trip, senor. We came to a big desert. My mother was taken sick—and she died. I know only this much, senor: I wandered on alone, far into the desert. I was nearly dead with thirst when I came to a water-hole. There Juan Lopez—and the woman—found me; and they took me with them."

The American listened eagerly to the boy's meager account; at the conclusion he asked: "Where did you learn to speak my language, Yo Tambien?"

"From my mother I learned—and some at school."

"A mission school?"

"Yes, senor."

"A mission high up on the side of a mountain—with a double row of trees leading to it?"

"Yes, senor," the boy answered, wonderingly. "How could you know?"

"I didn't know; I merely surmised. I saw such a mission yesterday. I am only asking you these questions, Yo Tambien, to get a line on things, so we may know best what to do. What was your father's name?"

"James Mallory?"

"Then your parents were not Mexicans?"

"My mother was a Spanish lady, but she had lived in the United States."

"And since that night you have not heard from your father—not since the night you and your mother ran away from him?"

"Only thru the Indians. I learned that he knew of my mother's death; and that he had offered a large reward for my return?"

"You knew that?"

"Yes, senor."

"And you never told Black Juan—or the woman—where they could find your father?"

"Never."

"Why not?"

"They were so cruel—I did not want them to get the money——"

"And just to keep them from getting the reward, you wouldn't go to your own father——"

"Why should I go to him?"

"Because——"

"I hate him!"

Fellows was silent for a moment; then he said, soberly: "Yo Tambien—I want to take you with me; I want to keep you with me, always. For one thing, it was you who saved my life; but I felt this same way toward you even before you did that!"

"And I, senor——"

"Listen. I want to take you with me; but there is a duty we owe your father—even tho he was cruel to you, and to the little mother you loved. Do you understand me, Yo Tambien?"

The boy remained silent.

Fellows continued: "We must find your father; I will have a talk with him. You must take me to him."

The boy's face became pale, but his dark eyes seemed suddenly to flash. "That, senor," he said, simply, "I will not do."

It was evident that, despite all the cruel torment to which he had been subjected, the boy's spirit was by no means crushed. Fellows spoke no word of reproach; instead, he arose, packed up the balance of the food and the two set forth again on their way. The boy's defiance had vanished on the instant. He seemed to regret having spoken as he did; he was sorry—yet he could not bring himself to the point of saying so. His manner toward his benefactor was still one of reverence and devotion. But thruout the long afternoon he remained strangely quiet and reserved.

With the coming of the dusk, Fellows felt that they might safely travel along the highway; they turned into it at a point not far from the mission.

"That is where you went to school, Yo Tambien?" Fellows asked.

"Yes, senor; I went there for two years—up to the time we ran away." He hesitated for a moment; then, as tho on the impulse of a sudden resolution, he added: "Come this way with me, senor."

Fellows followed him, at a loss to know what to expect.

Turning from the main road, the boy hurried on up a little trail leading up the steep slopes back of the mission. They came at length to a grove; thru this they passed, then on up the grade until they reached a little clearing, in which remote spot stood a small stone house. There was an air of loneliness about the place; a prevailing somberness which the single candle burning valiantly inside tried to dispel.

They approached the huge closed door in front. Here Yo Tambien stopped; turning to his companion, he spoke, and in tones in which contriteness was the only emotion:

"Inside, senor," he said, "you will find—my father."

CHAPTER XIV.
THE THIRTEENTH OPAL.

FELLOWS knocked. Getting no response, he tried again, but without result. He turned inquiringly toward the boy.

"Back of the house," said Yo Tambien, "is his workshop; perhaps he is there."

They went around to the rear, to a smaller structure of rough stone. There was a window at the side, from which shone a gleam of yellow light. They looked in, and without effort, the point where they stood being considerably higher than the level of the window. "He's in there," Yo Tambien said, passively.

The man inside, the sole occupant of the room, was busy pottering over some sort of work-bench; at the end was a furnace, the glow from which lighted up the whole interior, as well as every detail and line of the workman's form and countenance.

The form was stooped; tho once it must have possessed strength beyond the ordinary, now it showed a feebleness not so much from age as illness. The face was an unusual one, denoting both a measure of force and weakness; of intellect and genius, capable of application and mental concentration, but showing as well the effect of passions unrestrained, of impulses not always the best—and, above all, a sadness which comes only with bitter realization of mistakes which had been made in the past, which no earthly power could ever change or rectify. Fellows studied the countenance as it stood forth revealed by the glow of the furnace. He felt that the owner could be—or, perhaps, had been—equal to all the cruelty of which the boy had told; and equal also to better things. From the way he mumbled to himself as he worked, Fellows concluded that he was no longer sound mentally, and it was certain, from the manner in which he placed any object he wished to inspect close to his eyes, that his vision was greatly impaired.

Near the window was a narrow door; at this Fellows knocked. The muttering within ceased abruptly. The door swung open; the boy stepped forward into the flood of light. There was a silence, broken suddenly by a high, tremulous exclamation—a sort of mingled cry of

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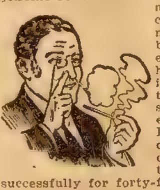

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While drifting from bad to worse, as all slaves of Demon Alcohol do, I unexpectedly found something wonderful. It saved my life. **My health was quickly restored.** I became and am a respectable man, enjoying every benefit of freedom from the **accursed alcohol.** I speedily and naturally lost all desire for drink. I took less and less. I began to prefer tea, coffee, buttermilk and other non-alcoholic liquids; the **craving** for liquor ceased, I could sleep perfectly, my stomach became well, and I recovered from other ailments which were no doubt due to my indulgence in drink.

Drink Habit

It was done in 3 days; if I had relied upon will-power or faith I would still be a drunkard, because an alcohol slave has **no will-power while drinking.** I rejoiced so greatly in having found true relief that I decided to devote a part of my life to helping remove the curse from others and my success has been marvelous. Many are saved from the drink habit because they desire to get rid of it forever and others who do not have any will-power left are rescued **without their knowledge** by loving wives, mothers or friends, through secret method explained. The after-effect of getting rid of drink habit gives energy throughout the entire body; the mind, memory and will-power may be **greatly strengthened.**

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gladness and a groan; then the word-

"Jean—my boy! My little boy come back to me—at last!"

The boy submitted to the man's fervent embrace and caresses, first passively, then with evident annoyance; then, as tho to escape them, he announced, "Here is the gentleman who brought me!"

James Mallory turned to greet Fellows; it was the first notice he had taken of him. He stepped up close so that his fading eyes could catch a glimpse of the American's countenance; then he extended his hand, saying in solemn fervency. "Sir, you have brought my boy back to me. If you could only bring his mother as well! But for this I cannot ever thank you enough. I did wrong by them both; I have suffered for it. I want to make amends." He stopped abruptly, and went back to the boy. The genuine affection of the man, which met nothing more than something almost akin to abhorrence on the part of the son, smote Fellows to the heart. The father was too absorbed and taken up with his own happiness to note it, however. He went on fussing over the boy, asking him question after question, and getting only one-word replies, or else no response at all.

Suddenly Mallory turned again to the American. "By the way, the reward I have been offering the last few weeks for the boy's return. It is five thousand dollars. Pardon me for not speaking of it sooner. I suppose, sir, you want the money at once——"

"You suppose wrong!" Fellows broke in. "I didn't bring the boy here because of any reward offered."

"No? Why, then?"

"Because I thought it my duty to bring him to you. I want no money for doing this."

The man stepped closer to Fellows as tho to study his face more particularly. He then conducted them out of the shop, and into the house. It was scrupulously clean and lamentably dreary.

He began preparing supper for the two, talking incessantly as he went about his task. Fellows told him of his part in finding the boy. His account seemed to excite the father to a still greater degree.

Seeking to quiet him, Fellows observed: "Now, Mr. Mallory, in the morning after we've had a good rest, I want to have a long talk with you about the boy. I have taken a great interest in him. I want you to let me take care of him——"

"No—no, I'll never give him up!"

"Now, don't misunderstand me. I don't want you to give him up exactly—well, we'll talk that all over in the morning."

For a moment the father sat in silence, then he arose slowly and went over and clasped Fellows by the hand

"Yes—yes, in the morning we will talk it all over; but tonight I want to tell you something, too. You are a man I can trust; when you refused to take money as a reward I knew you were different from most men. So you shall have more than the mere five thousand; when I am gone you, and little Jean, shall have all I possess."

Not knowing what to say in reply to this unexpected declaration, Fellows remained silent. The other resumed. "I have money—plenty of it; look here——" He pushed back a panel in the wall, revealing a strong iron box within. There's enough money to do us three, and I'm going to show you how to make more, besides!" He closed the panel, without having opened the box

Suddenly he exclaimed, "Do you know what they call me 'round these parts?"

"No, I do not," Fellows replied.

The other laughed high and shrill. "Well, they call me a hermit; they call me 'The Hermit of the Hill!'"

Fellows gazed at him wonderingly. For want of something better to say, he observed: "Well, Mr. Mallory, in a way, you are a sort of hermit, aren't you? You have lived away up here all alone——"

"But a hermit's poor!"

"Usually, I presume."

"I'm rich."

"And is—is this generally known?"

"You bet it ain't! You—the man who brought my boy back to me—may know. I trust you, and no other living man. And I'm going to tell you more, too—and tonight; come back with me into my workshop."

Fellows followed, wondering to just what degree the other's mentality might be deranged. "I have made here," Mallory went on, "a study of the chemical and physical properties of artificial mineral. I studied this in direct comparison with the natural prototype. Knowing with accuracy not only the constituents but the processes by which the real is formed, I have succeeded in improving upon old Mother Nature herself; understand me?"

"I do not," Fellows admitted frankly.

"You will when I explain. See, there is my Nernst arc; here is my iridium crucible furnace, in which I can obtain a temperature of 1,800 degrees centigrade. Over there is my apparatus for high-pressure research, and practical work. See here——" He pulled out a draw from the bench, and lifted a small tray from it containing a dozen or more beautiful opals.

He laughed in a squeaky falsetto at Fellows' look of amazement. "Where do you suppose I got those?" he asked

A suspicion of the truth began forming in Fellows' mind. "Surely," he began, "you—you didn't——"

"That's what I did. I made 'em!"

The mystery the young American had come to Querétaro to solve was a mystery no longer. He restrained his emotion with an effort, asking a multitude of questions to be sure that his supposition was correct. Mallory put the opals away and led the visitor back into the house.

"Fellows," he went on in a shaky voice, "experts say that an opal is the only gem which cannot be successfully imitated; well, I've done it, haven't I?"

"Apparently, you have."

"You bet I have. I've been fooling 'em all around here, tourists and experts alike, since I perfected my process; and I will fool 'em a little longer, too; you, and the old 'Hermit of the Hill'—ha! ha!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean this: In the morning I'm going to show you something no mortal knows but myself. The process of making opals—opals better than the genuine! Now, we'll all turn in for a good night's sleep. In the morning we'll decide what best to do with Jean. In the morning you'll learn the most valuable secret in the scientific world!"

The boy insisted upon sleeping with Fellows, so Mallory, to humor him, turned over his bed to them, making a bed of blankets for himself out in his workshop.

Yo Tambien, worn out by the day's excitement, was asleep almost by the time his head struck the pillow. Fellows had too much to think over to slumber at once finally dreamless sleep came to him

He awoke at an early hour the next morning, bright and refreshed Without awakening Yo Tambien, he dressed and went out to see after Mallory. On entering the workshop, he was surprised to see his host's form still on the pile of blankets He went in and shook him gently by the shoulder. He bent over closer Suddenly, then, and with a half stifled exclamation, he arose

There was no evidence or suspicion of foul play the candle, flickering with unusual brightness for a brief interval, had suddenly gone out. Nature had run her true and inexplicable course. The secret of the opals, to be divulged in the morning, was lost to the world forever. The father of little Jean Mallory was dead

CHAPTER XV

THE FINAL ERRAND.

THE following afternoon, Stanley Fellows and his exuberant young protege departed for Mexico City. As the train neared their destination, the American turned to the boy with the query:

"Yo Tambien, are you sure you are willing to leave this country, forever in all probability, to go and live with me in the United States?"

Yo Tambien turned and gazed out of the window, at the whole valley of Mexico spreading away in a magnificent panorama. He could see the city itself, with its innumerable churches and convents; the great aqueducts stretching across the plain, the avenues of elms and poplars which lead to the city, the pretty villages and lakes surrounding. To the north the magnificent cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe; to the south the villages of San Augustin, San Angel and Tacubya, which seemed imbosomed in trees, and looked like an immense garden. Even the plains below, with uncultivated fields and buildings falling to ruin, still looked tranquilly beautiful in the glorious inclosure of mountains; with the two mighty volcanoes towering above, Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl—the Gog and Magog of the valley—from off whose giant sides great volumes of misty clouds were rolling; the turquoise sky smiling down over all, a scene of peaceful splendor

The boy turned from the window. Placing his slender little hand within Fellows' big brawny one, he said, quietly: "Mexico is wonderful—and lovely;

(Continued on Page 26.)

Cause of Early Wrinkles Found

New Discovery Makes Pores Small

When the skin begins to sag and wrinkles appear it means that every cell in the skin begins to sag, and the pores grow larger and less vigorous. The finer and smoother the skin, the smaller the pores. It is now possible to make the pores smaller, making the skin as youthful and fine in texture as a baby's. This is done by the simple use of eptol applied liberally. Eptol may be obtained in drug stores in two-ounce packages for about fifty cents. Made into a cream by adding water it brings surprising results. If inconvenient to reach a drug store, it will be sent direct on receipt of price by the Cooper Pharmacal Co. [illegible] Thompson Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

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A Page for the Ledger Boys and Girls

Lessons From a Gull

THERE once was a little boy living in the town of Good Intent who had a gull of which he was very fond. Now, boys who live far from the sea or lakes may not know that a gull is a white bird that flies out over the water and that it is never satisfied to be long on land.

But Philip, for that was the boy's name, concluded that the bird should be taught to stay at home, so he tied a string to its leg and the end of the string he tied to the bedpost. The gull looked sick and sorry as it settled down under the bed, but Philip came to it and demanded that it stand up.

"We are going to make a civilized bird out of you," he said, "one that will stay at home and live in nests like the birds of the woods and fields. There is no sense in staying out on the water so much of your time—in fact, it is a waste of time—and if you stayed on land you would not only make yourself more agreeable to others, but you would find it would pay. Worms are easy to find, if you get up early enough in the morning, and then you can be much more comfortable and warmer on land."

The bird never said a word, but hung its head and looked dejected.

"Maybe it is too warm in this room," said Philip, and so he opened the window. The bird looked at the window and sniffed the fresh air in the way that birds sniff, by opening its mouth and seeming to swallow, but the cruel string on its leg would not let it move. Then it began pecking at the string when Philip was not looking, and after awhile it had worn thru, but Philip sat in the room and the gull made no move.

Then Philip stepped out of the door and, quick as a flash, the gull was on the window sill, and Philip came into the room just in time to see it whirl up into the air and start off in long spirals toward the lake, just as tho it were an airship showing off its stunts. The fact of the matter was that the string still clung to its leg and, altho it did not prevent its flying, it made it fly in a one-sided way, but never did it stop until it was on a rock, far away from the town of Good Intent.

Oh, the glory of that nice, clean, smooth rock, after the stuffiness of the house in which Philip lived. The gull could not express itself, but it swallowed great mouthfuls of air, as tho to rid itself of all that it had been thru.

There was the clean rock, a ship out at sea, the long line of the golden light of the setting sun over the water, everything that a gull loved, and why should it not be happy, even if a bit of string dangled from its leg?

But Philip was inconsolable. His father promised to buy him a parrot, but he said there would be no fun in teaching a parrot to talk as all parrots talked, but he had thought to teach a gull to forsake its wild life and live nice and comfortable in a town house, and that would have been worth while.

"What is worth while?" said a voice at his elbow, as he lay on his bed crying about the lost gull.

"Who are you?" asked Philip.

"Who am I?" answered the voice, "well, I like that. I am your other self."

"Have I got two selves?"

"Of course you have. Every one has."

"You look furry and funny," Philip said. "You can't fool me. I never came in contact with you before."

"I may be furry, but I am not funny," said the little creature, that looked up at Philip. "I am your better self, but you are not very well acquainted with me."

"Why my better self?" asked Philip.

"Because I suggest all the unselfish thoughts that you have and try to persuade you to put other people's feelings before your own. I do not often succeed, but I think that as you grow older we shall know one another better."

"Did you suggest that I capture the gull?"

"Indeed I did not. Why should I suggest that you try to make a free, white, beautiful gull into a domestic bird, that would prefer to peck away in the bush to flying into the face of the sun?"

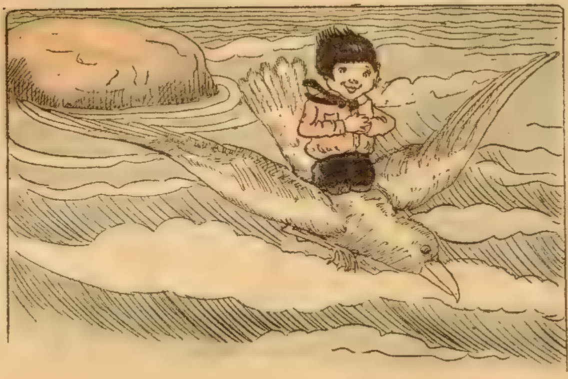
"That's it!" said Philip. "It is dangerous to fly in the face of the sun and my idea was to make it safe for the gull, to change its nature until it would love to be a domestic bird, as you call it."

"I have an idea," said the little furry creature, "that you thought less of the comfort of the bird than of your own success in making a convert of it. You wanted to hear the people say, 'Philip took a wild gull and made a barnyard bird of it,' and you did not so much care what the bird would miss by ceasing to be itself."

"But if it forgot about it and thought only as land birds think, where was the harm?"

"It would never think as land birds think—goodness gracious, what is that?"

There was a big splash against the window pane from above and then something fell to the window sill. "If it isn't the gull returned," said the furry creature.



From White Top to White Top of the Waves the Gull Rushed On.

"Now what do you make of that?" said Philip. "Has it not returned because it got a little taste of the happiness of the homes of Good Intent and would like to stay here?"

"It has not," said the furry creature, "it has come for a sign."

"What kind of a sign?"

"You showed your selfishness when it came last and now it has thrown itself upon your generosity. Will you cut the cord that still dangles from its leg, or will you catch it again and make a prisoner of it?"

"What would you advise?"

"As your better self I should advise you to help this bird to its own idea of freedom. To cut the cord that bound it to civilization and let it breast the waves and fly into the heart of the sun if it wishes to."

"But it would be so safe here."

"Safe here? Yes, so it would, be safe to eat and drink and stifle its heartache, until in desperation its feelings would be blunted and people would say that it was resigned to its fate and has ceased to be a wild bird, happy in its domestication."

Philip caught the thread and pulled the gull to him.

"I had great hopes for the gull," he said.

"Are you so sure that it was the happiness of the gull that you thought of?"

"But what is happiness but peace and safety? What is the good of flying in the face of the sun and shivering in the cold? I think I shall try the experiment again."

Philip made fast the end of the thread and immediately the bird dropped.

"It trusted you," said the better self.

The bird made no motion of any kind, but it looked long into the eyes of Philip and the boy's eyes looked away first.

"If I only knew for certain," said Philip.

"That is easy enough," said the better self. "Are you ready to trust the bird as it has trusted you?"

Philip hesitated and then he slipped the cord from the leg of the bird. It hesitated a moment and then made for the window, and Philip found himself on its back, not the Philip he knew, but the better self, whom he had never seen until that day.

The bird made great and glorious lunges thru the air and Philip rejoiced in its graceful motions and the strength with which so small a bird breasted the wind. Finally they alighted on the big, smooth rock and far down below Philip could see the fish, their shining backs like jewels in the sun-lit waters. He found himself in touch with the little bird upon whose back he rode and he knew that it must fly out and meet an incoming ship.

"It is a sign that land is near," he said to himself. From white top to white top of the waves the gull rushed on and never in his life did Philip experience anything like the elation of that ride over the waves, for the waves dashed high and then broke in great masses of white foam that hid the cruel rocks upon which the ship might have lashed itself.

"There are so many hidden dangers in the world," said Philip, "and even in the town of Good Intent there may be rocks that I know not of."

What a great and glorious world it is, he thought, when on the back of the gull he darted right into the pathway of the sun. Oh, we are going right up, up—I am sure the gates of heaven are opening and I am not at all afraid. I am so glad that I did not make captive this magnificent gull. Now here we are right on the edge of the sun——"

"Philip," said his mother, "why don't you pull down your blinds if you are going to sleep under the window in that way? Your head is hot, and I am afraid you will be sick with that hot sun shining in your face for the last hour."

"No, I won't, mother," he said. "I never felt better in my life, and I am going to let the gull go."

"Why, it has gone," said his mother.

◆

Jame's Grouch Cure

ONE afternoon shortly after the holidays Jamie felt all out of sorts. He had eaten a great deal of turkey, and far more candy than was good for him, and that probably had something to do with the way he felt. I am sorry to say he spoke rather crossly when his little cousin Jean, who was spending the holidays with him, tried to run his electric train and bent one of the wheels. He moped around and said he wanted to be let alone when Jean begged him to go outdoors to play in the snow. Jean looked as tho she were about ready to burst into tears.

Jamie's grandmother looked up from her knitting and saw how unhappy and cross the children seemed to be. Putting her knitting away, she asked, "I wonder who would like to hear a story?"

Jamie sat up in his chair. Jean swallowed the lump in her throat and looked more cheerful. At the same moment they both said, "I would!" and laughed.

Grandmother pushed back her glasses and smiled. "Let's see, now what shall it be?"

She looked all around the room. When her eyes came to a dish of stuffed dates on the table they stopped.

"How would a story about dates do?" she asked.

"Fine!" cried Jamie, looking at Jean. "That's the kind of a story I love, don't you, Jean?"

"I never heard a story like that," Jean replied, "but I'd like to hear one."

"Dates, sweet and brown, were eaten by little children thousands of years ago, for the date palm is one of the oldest plants cultivated by man. Three thousand years ago the date palm grew and bore fruit."

"Where?" Jamie wanted to know.

"In the countries of the far East, probably Arabia or southern Asia," grandmother replied.

"Why, that's where the three wise men came from isn't it?" Jean asked, remembering the story of the Babe in the manger, to whom the wise men in the East were guided by a star.

"Yes, and perhaps among the gifts they laid at the feet of the Christ Child were dates," grandmother said.

The children looked at the dates thoughtfully.

Grandmother went on. "The date palm is very high, sometimes reaching a height of 100 feet or more. It is an odd-looking tree, too, for it has no leaves except at the very top, where it spreads out in a wide, feathery bunch. The leaves are very long, sometimes ten feet long. Up among the leaves the fruit grows."

"Do they grow on little stems, like apples," Jamie asked.

"No, the dates grow in big bunches, weighing from fifteen to forty pounds. And a single tree will often have ten or fifteen bunches."

"Why, grandmother, one tree would have an awful lot of dates on it!" exclaimed Jamie.

"Yes, some date trees have as high as 500 pounds of dates, and they bear for a hundred years, too!"

"How pretty the trees must look when they bloom," said Jean. "What color are the blossoms, grandmother?"

"A clear white," she answered. "I often think how lovely the date palms in blossom must look to travelers on the desert, who are worn and weary from their hot journeys across the sands. You see, the date palm sometimes grows in oases on the desert. You know what they are, don't you?"

"They are water holes in the desert," answered Jamie eagerly. "But I should think the hot air of the desert would kill the trees!"

"No, the date palm must have hot, dry air to thrive, with lots of water at the roots. So you see an oasis is just the kind of place for it. Of course, date palms are planted on plantations, too, just as we plant apple trees. They are set out in rows twenty-five feet apart, and begin to bear dates when they are about four years old."

"Do the people in those eastern countries like dates?" Jean asked.

"Yes, indeed! Dates form the greatest part of their living. They eat dates, either raw or dried. Sometimes they pound them into solid cakes, to take on journeys across the desert. Wine and honey is made from the sap of the tree. Out of the roasted seeds they make a drink something like coffee, and sometimes the seeds are ground to get the oil out of them. The young leaves are also eaten, as we eat cabbage. The date leaves are woven into mats and baskets and the trunks used to build houses and fences."

"My goodness!" said Jamie. "Date palms are valuable, aren't they? Do we have any date trees here in this country?"

"Yes, in California, and some in Arizona and New Mexico. The Spaniards brought date palms to California when it was first settled, and some of them are still standing. But we import millions of pounds every year."

"Whew!" exclaimed Jean, "I should think they would spoil on the way over, they are so sweet. Do they put sugar on the dates?"

"No, dates are over half sugar themselves. And they are cured before they are shipped, in order to keep them. Whole bunches are put in warm, moist rooms before they are quite ripe and sort of preserved."

Smiles had driven the clouds away from Jamie's face. "That story about dates has made me feel better. Let's go out for a run!" he suggested.

And away they ran out into the snow.

◆

The Purple Fish.

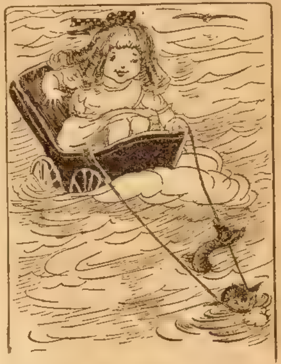
SHALL I tell you what happened to Elsie one day? She was sitting on the beach in her green cart, which had lost both wheels, so that it was not of much use as a cart, tho very nice to sit in. And presently a purple fish, with a yellow tail, came and looked at her. And he said:

"Little maiden, fair to see,
Will you take a trip with me?"

Elsie smiled and answered:

"Yes, I will, without a doubt,
If you will not tip me out."

Then the purple fish took the string of the cart in his mouth and swam away. The cart bobbed up and down on the waves and behaved quite like a boat, and Elsie clapped her hands and laughed and sang. The fish swam on and on, till at length he came to a little island all covered with purple hyacinths and yellow violets. Here he stopped and bade Elise get out, saying—



The Purple Fish Took the String of the Cart in His Mouth and Swam Away.

"Now if you will marry me,
Here we'll live and happy be."

But Elsie did not like this at all, tho the island was very beautiful. She shook her head resolutely and replied—

"If you please, I do not wish
For to marry any fish."

Then the purple fish was angry, writes Laura E. Richards in "Five Minute Stories," and his yellow tail quivered with vexation. He said sternly:

"If you will not be my wife,
You shall stay here all your life."

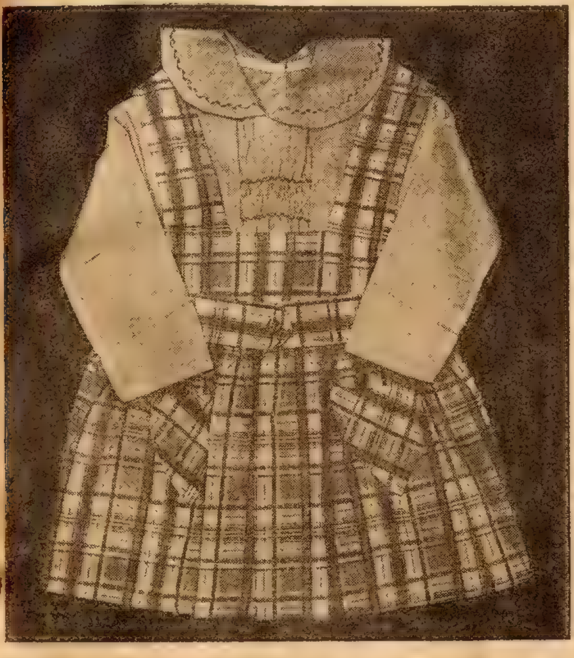
And off he swam, taking the green

(Continued on Page 27.)

For the Woman Who Sews or Embroiders

A Child's Dress With Smocked Guimp

BY ELIZABETH BERNE.



TO THE little miss of 6 to 8 years old a practical gingham dress like the one shown in the illustration will strongly appeal. It is dressy and has attractive handwork done on the guimp, showing the thoughtfulness and the kindly effort of mother's patient fingers. Pink is the keynote of this model, altho green, tan or blue are equally attractive.

The guimp and sleeves of plain color match the predominating shade of the plaid, with the work done in black and white mercerized embroidery cotton. The six strand is the most desirable for all around embroidery work, for sometimes one needs the entire six threads, as for the smocking, and then only two threads are used in the needle at once, as for the featherstitching.

Smocking is not new work, but it is the kind of needlework which lends itself charmingly to the decorating of children's wear. It is attractive on account of its simplicity and durability. There is no more economical trimming, for it requires no stamping pattern and is only stitches embroidered on folds or plaits and gives fullness either above or below or at both parts. In gauging the amount of material required, one must first consider the design to be used. The one shown here and intended for every-day wear is simple and it has taken 6 inches of material to make 3 inches of smocking. Measure 3 inches down from the center front of neck and make the top of the smocking on this line across.

Lay the material in small plaits and with the black make *, one stitch entering the plait from the left side and bringing the stitch out above it at the right side, bring the stitch over to the left side of next plait, pass needle downward and out at the right side of plait, repeat * for the width of the smocking. Fasten the thread more securely than for ordinary sewing. Of the white, start ½ inch below and make the first stitch as for the above, then skip the next plait, using only the left half, and about ¼ inch downward make the same stitch; continue back and forth with the white, skip ½ inch and repeat the first row of black.

For the border of the collar make a triple featherstitching. For this make a fan shape of 3 stitches, coming together at the base; then make one stitch of double this length and continue as shown in the illustration. The collar and guimp open down the back. The box plaited skirt and high waisted jumper are machine stitched together. The guimp is made separate and by hand sewing this to the jumper at the waist it can be easily removed and laundered and the jumper pressed, thus saving the washing of the entire dress.

Your Kitchen in War Time

Arranging the Goodies for Winter

BY MARY FULLER WEST.

JUST about this time of the year the housewife goes into the pantry or cellar and looks with pride on the display of neatly labeled jars, glasses and bottles of jams, preserves, jellies, fruits and pickles that line the shelves. They represent hard labor, skill and not a little capital invested, and as she surveys them, she knows that every jar means at least one meal made better because of her foresight. Is it any wonder, then, that she feels much the same satisfaction in looking at her store of goodies that an actress feels when she reads the latest reviews of her success, or that a writer experiences on receipt of the first check with three figures?

Most of us usually arrange this display something like this: We place the jars of preserved peaches in a neat row, then come pears, quinces and whatever other fruit we have "put up." Afterward come the jellies, the jams, all arranged as to kind, and finally the pickled stuff, such as mustard pickles, piccalilli, chow-chow and what not

In many instances, one kind of jelly, jam or preserves disappears before any of the others are touched. Most families have a special liking for a certain kind of canned goods during the season. This does not mean, by any means, that the demand will not vary from year to year, so that the housewife might be able to meet the excess demand when she was canning her fruits and vegetables. On the contrary, a family may develop a special liking for strawberry jam, one year, and transfer its allegiance to some marmalade or other the next. If the housewife were to try to fit the supply to the demand based on a previous year's experience, the chances are that she would be left with an excess number of jars of that one special product the following spring.

However, there is one way of preventing such a depletion of the stock of favorite canned food. One housewife, whose family plays favorites with the canned fruits and vegetables, has hit upon a new scheme for arranging her goodies on her pantry shelves. Instead of lining them up according to the contents of the jars, she very carefully made estimates of her stock on hand at the beginning of the season. This year she discovered that she had about fifty bottles of catsup and chili sauce, about a dozen jars of piccalilli and a like number of chow-chow. There were also about two hundred jars of canned fruits, jams and jellies. She figured that there would be about six months in which her family would want those canned things, and she apportioned them off accordingly, allowing two jars of chow-chow, two of piccalilli, eight of catsup and chili sauce to each month. Of course, the jams, jellies and fruits were divided off in the same manner.

She then placed the goodies on the shelf according to months, instead of size or contents, and they were brought to the table from time to time in this order. All of her canned fruits and vegetables were good and there was no reason why some of them should not be eaten. In this she managed not only to have variety, but she saw to it that there was plenty for the entire season. Some of us whose families like a certain kind of fruit or preserves, might follow her scheme with benefit.

❧

Household Hints.

USE for refrigerator dishes wooden or pasteboard plates such as bakers deliver pies upon. They are inexpensive, do not break, and can be bent a little to make more room.

In mixing flour for gravy use a silver fork and the gravy will never be lumpy.

Keep your spices in glass jars and a glance will tell you the contents even if not labeled.

Black and white cotton goods should be soaked in a solution of salt water to prevent the black from running

Thin brown, toast bread, with stewed tomatoes and sprinkled with grated cheese, then browned in the oven, is a savory dish.

Cornmeal may be used with wheat flour, about one-quarter of the first and three-quarters of the second, in making white bread

Fish will crisp and brown if it is thoroly dried on both sides, then dipped in fine cornmeal and plunged into boiling fat

A frying basket should be warmed in the oven before being put into hot fat. It will thus not reduce the temperature of the fat.

Before using mutton dripping as shortening, beat with spoonful of baking powder and two teaspoonfuls of lemon juice.

If cake sticks to the pan let stand on a wet cloth

In cutting fresh bread heat the knife to prevent the bread from crumbling.

To prevent the juice of berry pie from boiling out grease the edge of the pie with oleomargarine.

❧

Soap From Fat Scraps.

ECONOMY is developed to its fullest extent by the armies in France and Flanders. In connection with the commissariat is a department for the elimination of waste, and each soldier, except in the very front trenches, where it would be impossible, is compelled to scrape his plate for the purpose. This refuse is gathered up and collected at certain points behind the lines, where it is sorted and put to various uses, not the least important of which is the soap used by the Army and Navy

The art of soap making, which a hundred years ago was known to almost every household, has never quite died out and should profitably be revived. Directions for soap making are given with the various brands of lye upon the market.—U. S. Food Administration.

❧

Grandma's Brown Bread.

TWO cups sweet milk, 3 cups corn meal, 1 wheat flour, 1 good teaspoon soda, 1 cup sour milk, 1 cup barley flour, 1 cup molasses, 1 teaspoon salt.

Bake about 1 hour in moderate oven (Note this is a large recipe.)

❧

To Keep Yolks.

IF YOLKS of eggs which are not wanted for immediate use are dropped into cold water and put into a cold place they will keep fresh for several days.

❧

Fish.

FISH, like meat, is particularly attractive to flies, therefore any cooked remnants should be carefully screened while cooling. Fish should not be placed in contact with butter or milk in the ice box

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DAILY HEALTH TALKS

WHAT DOCTOR PIERCE HAS DONE FOR HUMANITY!

BY DOCTOR CRIPPS.

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The Head of Adam

(Continued From Page 11.)

associate, and remained noncommital until they reached the end of land.

Just beyond, the waters of the Pacific Ocean rolled in the fog.

"We will now dismount, tie our horses, take Mr. Rodley's boat and go out," was Miss Lane's clear statement.

"Go out?" gasped Dudley. "Why should we do that?"

"We have used a dark-lantern and masks, and we have them here. We must get rid of them, so we will sink them in the ocean—not near shore, where they would be found, but in deep water."

"I see no reason for taking that trouble. The masks can be burned, and what if the lantern is returned to its former place?"

"It is best that we be rid of all evidence against us."

"Just cast the lantern into the water and it will quickly fill and sink. Nobody will ever find it."

"Indeed, I shall take no such chances. Only deep water will do. We must take the boat and go out a respectable distance."

"And get lost in the fog!"

"We need not go far enough for that. Now, really, Mr. Dudley, I wish you would not oppose me in this. I don't want the Lane name sullied by any misdemeanor like our night's venture. Can't you understand that?"

"All that is clear, but these things can be destroyed without risking more trouble by going out in the black fog——"

"In one word," she interrupted with asperity, "will you agree to my plan, or do you deny my right to manage my own private affairs?"

Her stubborn mood had given place to temper, and the promoter no longer struggled against the inevitable. Agreeing to obey her instructions, he tied the horses to convenient trees, to guard against their wandering away. Clara easily found the boat, and as it was wholly afloat it was just as easy to cast off the rope and leave the land.

"Here's the painter, which is not essential to us," he remarked. "Also a sizeable stone that may have been used as a crude anchor. As the boat end is hitched to the craft we will take all along with us. Here we go!"

"Now as briskly as you please," she urged. "It is always a delight to go to sea, and when circumstances are like these, it appeals to all who dote on salt water air. Why, it's just like sailing in an ink-well, it is so black. Isn't it romantic?"

Dudley tried to shape words of agreement, but sounded only a vague muttering. He was using the oars slowly, and each pull added to his concern. The wind was vexing the water, which flowed rather heavily, but there was no danger from that source. The thick fog that defied the eyes was not to be regarded as lightly, and he was frankly afraid of it. After rowing a hundred yards he paused, whereupon she urged him to go farther. He yielded, but presently drew in the oars sharply.

"We must not go another foot into this blackness!" he exclaimed decisively. "To do that would be to get utterly lost."

"I admit that," she replied quietly. "We have gone far enough. Here, Mr. Dudley, is a cord that I brought from my own home. Tie one end to the stone and the other to the Rembrandt, and sink the whole lot in the ocean!"

"Sink—the Rembrandt?"

"Exactly," she answered tensely, "that is just why we are here. I am going to make an end of that miserable painting. Weight it, and sink it!"

"This is not the time to joke——"

"There is no joke. Do you think—do you really think I came out here to sink a lantern and two masks? I told you so before we started, but if it were true I should myself be the joke. There are times, sir, when words count like volumes, and this is one of them. Tonight that wretched Rembrandt must disappear forever from the sight of men. Please hasten with the work."

"Miss Lane, what would your father say?"

"He would say, 'Amen!'"

"To the destruction of the gem of his collection, the twenty-five thousand dollar painting——"

"There you have it!" she cried. "Do you think I would turn burglar for a miserable sum like that? Maybe you understand now why I declined to call in the chief of police. The Rembrandt goes into the ocean!"

"My dear young lady, you do not realize——"

"Will you obey me? Tie that miserable Head of Adam to the stone and sink it as deep as possible. Do not delay! Sink it forever!"

Dudley at last understood that she was in earnest. When at home she had spoken disdainfully of the picture, and he had doubted her good faith. He doubted no longer. She wanted it destroyed, and the amazing fact revealed no explanation. She wanted it destroyed, but why?

CHAPTER VIII.

DUDLEY'S PRIZE.

THE boat drifted idly with the lift of the ocean water before the breath of the wind. Its occupants sat silent, two black shapes but little darker than the pall of fog, and one of them remained bewildered. Dudley was ordered to sink the Head of Adam in the ocean, the Rembrandt masterpiece of great moneyed value and artistic worth. The command had been clear, but the motive was past comprehension.

Why sink the painting in the Pacific?

"Has this trouble of Hiram Blount made matters so unpleasant for you?" he finally asked, feeling for the elusive trail to the facts.

"It has nothing to do with it," Clara promptly replied.

"But I can't understand——"

"Mr. Dudley, I don't like it out here, and I really must insist upon our task being completed immediately. Will you attend to it, or must I act for myself?"

She was certainly definite, and he comprehended that words would be wasted if he argued further, but the selfish side of the design impressed him more than ever.

The Rembrandt was essential to his safety and his reputation. During the first part of the ride he had explained to Miss Lane what the recovery of the picture would do to rehabilitate his tarnished reputation. She had listened, answered cheerfully, and gone ahead with her plan of destroying it. She had considered only her own interests. Now it occurred to him that, after her disregard, he would be justified if he considered his own welfare first of all.

"You are mistress here!" he replied crisply.

The way had occurred to him, and, thankful that the fog was hugging him, he became busy. Accepting the cord she had offered, he rattled the stone in due form, did a little tying, and then hoisted something and poised it above the water.

"Shall it be done?" he asked quietly.

"Yes!" she cried eagerly. "Hasten!"

There was a gurgle and he sat erect. The stone, the lantern and the masks were on their way to the bottom of the ocean, but, invisible to her in the darkness, the Rembrandt remained at Dudley's back.

"Thank Providence!" she breathed. "Now get back to land."

He lifted the oars, swinging them outward.

"Which way is it?" she asked.

"Which—which way?"

He held the oars suspended, staring into the fog. Sure enough, which way was it?

"Why, you can't be lost?" she cried excitedly. "Don't tell me you don't know the way to land!"

"Well, my attention has been diverted by recent events, and our boat has been drifting and swinging about without control or watching. Frankly, that means that we are at sea without compass or beacon, but that need not worry us. We are lost, but we shall find ourselves. The wind is our friend. I noticed before that it was coming out of the North. That means that it will be our guide to the land, which, of course, is off yonder, due east as the wind blows. I feel better."

Laughing cheerfully, he fell to rowing.

"I, too, feel better," she answered. "That Rembrandt is at the bottom of the sea. Splendid! I shall always be your friend, Mr. Dudley."

He doubted it. When she knew he had disobeyed orders, and that the Head of Adam was safe and sound—what then? He lifted an oar for a moment, ran his hand back and touched the treasure of art. What a glorious thing it was! For the first time in his life he enthused over the work of an old master. What a cargo he carried! Beauty and art! Other mariners, ancient and otherwise, were beaten to a standstill.

"Listen! I hear voices!" Clara whispered.

Dudley, too, heard the sounds, and he looked anxiously into the distance. Results followed, for the bulk of a vessel loomed before them, so near that they were almost under the overhang of the craft. Driven by the breeze, they were floating so directly upon her that he put out an oar to fend off and break the force of the impact.

They had not been discovered, and men talked on deck without suspecting what

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the sea had brought close to them. Night and the fog had saved them thus far, but Dudley hesitated to dip a blade to get away from where his boat lay, nor was he especially zealous to go. Confident that the brig Gray Gull was before him, he aspired to listen to that conversation, if any words came distinctly, but his attention was diverted.

The rough water was beating against the side of the brig, threatening to take the boat with it, and there was great danger of an upset. What was to be done?

He was struggling with this problem when a slightly distant hail came out of the darkness, off toward where he supposed land to be. There was a stir on deck, an answering call, and Dudley's heart lightened. Clearly, the Gray Gull had been riding at her anchor, waiting for somebody, and that somebody was at hand. The diversion was his opportunity.

Getting away from the overhang hastily he forced the boat into action after some effort and rowed into the fog, anxious to pass but not to be seen by those in the other boat, and the plan worked well.

When the sounds became louder he stopped and lay on his oars, peering sharply into the blackness of night. The strangers drew nearer, and the anxiety of the moment disappeared as they passed by a few yards distant.

Guided by soft calls they continued toward the brig, and the promoter fell to rowing again, bow toward the land.

"Oh! I'm so glad!" murmured Clara, not wholly calm. "We are safe, and our work is done."

"Yes," he returned, after some hesitation, "our work is done, but I am wondering what I shall say when placed on trial for stealing the Rembrandt. If it was in your museum, safely returned, I could point to my share in its recovery and claim that it almost proved I was not the thief who originally took it. How can I prove my innocence without it?"

"Why, father and I will say we do not care if it is gone."

"Will that remove the stain from my reputation?"

"Oh!" she explained, "you can easily live that down, and we will make it easy for you without the presence of the painting. We will deny anybody's right to criticise us."

"Will that clear my reputation?"

"Why not?"

"Sure enough, why not?"

He dipped his oars again and rowed on. A minute before, his most generous impulses in force, he had been ready to sacrifice himself for her and give the Head of Adam a belated fling into the sea. Now, stung by her indifference, he was resolved to consider himself wholly. If it was to be avoided, he did not intend to wear the badge of a thief the rest of his life.

When he had rowed a little farther the land lay before them. He grounded the boat, helped Clara out, deftly slipped the painting temporarily into the bushes and made the craft fast to a convenient tree with the painter.

"Are you worn out?" he asked. "Do you need my arm?"

"Hardly. Altho it's horribly dark, I am quite able to walk. Our real work is finished, so now let us take up our other burdens."

Dudley took up his own burden—the Rembrandt. It was a question whether he could continue to conceal it from her, but the fog furnished hope. Their horses were found as they had been left. He hung the Rembrandt on his saddle with its own cord, while making a pretense of seeing to the girths, and then, after assisting the lady to mount, swung into his saddle and they were once more under way.

"I am so glad!" she exclaimed presently, but immediately sighed, like one far from happy.

Dudley again had trouble with his conscience.

"Miss Lane," he replied, "will you tell me in direct words why you wanted that picture destroyed?"

"Oh!" she answered, suddenly laughing, "just because I hated the thing. Confidentially, old masters give me the creeps. Really, tho, didn't we have a bad minute under the counter of that brig?"

She had evaded the subject, and he submitted to her wishes. They were riding briskly toward Darlington Lane's house, and it all seemed over with, but after a time he came again to business.

"When we get to your house," he said, "I would like to see your father."

"Impossible!" she declared. "He is ill, and declines to deal with any part of this trouble at our museum. He has made me his representative, clearly stating that he will see nobody."

"Very well, it doesn't matter."

He said it stiffly, but she failed to notice his mood. It had been in his mind to lay all the facts before the owner of the Rembrandt, and then accept his judgment as to what was best. Rebuffed, he remembered that only the previous day he had seen Mr. Lane and, to all appearances, in good health, so he interpreted the present refusal to mean that that gentleman declined to hold any communication with him.

Brief regret was followed by renewed recollection that he could now consult his own interests exclusively.

In due time they reached the Lane home. The painting hung secure from the saddle, so he went to the door. There Clara turned toward him.

"Mr. Dudley," she said earnestly, and with evidences of sincerity, "I thank you most heartily for your help tonight. It is good to have a friend in time of need, and you have been loyal and steadfast. Believe me, you shall never suffer for that affair of the Rembrandt."

She hastily added a good night and was gone. As the door closed after her Dudley returned to his horse, mounted and rode out of the grounds. He proceeded a few rods, then turned into the inclosure again, this time near the museum. Tying his horse, he removed the painting from the saddle and, walking toward the dwelling-house, muttered certain views quietly.

"As nobody else cares for my reputation, I'll see what I can do for it."

Possibly his decision would have been otherwise influenced had he known that, at that moment, Clara was upon her knees in her chamber, thanking Heaven that the Head of Adam was at the bottom of the ocean.

He walked until near the north end of the house. Knowing the room occupied by David Kinglake, custodian of the museum, he intended to have speech with him. When under the window he tossed pebbles upward until that gentleman appeared.

"Mr. Kinglake," he then called, "will you come down? I have important news for you."

The custodian recognized him and, after some hesitation, said he would come. Possibly he did not wholly think well of a man with a tarnished reputation. He came and, meeting him at the door, Dudley held out the painting.

"Here, sir," he said quietly, "is the Rembrandt. I have had the good fortune to recover it, and now it is yours again."

Kinglake started, looked, and then clutched eagerly at the picture. His voice rang with almost boyish delight.

"Good, sir: very good! I am delighted. How in the world did you get it? But pray go to my room and let me hear everything."

He led the way and the promoter followed. Kinglake had already made a light, and as they entered his quarters he wheeled his burden around so the glare fell upon it.

"This is the happiest moment of my life!" he declared. "Words cannot tell how I have missed the blessed Rembrandt. It will be glorious to have it again with the collection——"

He had been gazing raptly, but as he broke off Dudley saw a swift change come to his face. Then the custodian went closer to the light, rapidly shifted the painting several times so he had it in different positions, and finally he wheeled, all amiability gone from his expression.

"So this is what you have brought!" he exclaimed severely.

"I don't understand," the promoter replied, beset with surprise.

"But I understand fully!" Kinglake retorted. "I've been in the business too long to be deceived, sir. This is not the painting we lost, nor is it any genuine Rembrandt. Your crafty game fails!"

"Not your Rembrandt!" Dudley gasped.

"Most decidedly not!" the custodian coldly replied.

"Why, man, where are your eyes? The picture answers for itself."

"It certainly does," Kinglake interrupted sharply. "Why persist in your transparent deceit? This picture—this burlesque upon the old masters—is the forgery known for one hundred years as the Hans Tychsen imitation. It is worth-

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less, and 't would break the heart of Rembrandt. Take it away!"

"Do you mean to say that it is not the Head of Adam that has so long been in this museum?"

"It certainly is not. It is my business to know works of art and to recognize them at sight. This particular counterfeit I have never seen before, but I've heard of it. Hans Tychsen, an artist of more ability than honor, painted it a century ago, trying to make it pass as a genuine Rembrandt. Some he deceived briefly, for it was not illy done, and all men in my profession know of it now. Elaborate descriptions are in print. I was not aware that it was in this country, but I see it now."

Pausing briefly, he looked at Dudley with fresh harshness. "But why do I tell you this?" he added. "Knowing its history, you thought to dupe me. Your attempt and the picture are both frauds. Do you hear?"

Dudley heard and realized the whole miserable truth. In trying to rehabilitate himself he had made a bad matter worse. In seeking to remove the stain of being an alleged thief he had not only become a real one, but had flaunted the stolen goods before the eyes of an unfriendly man.

More trouble and even greater mystery confront Dudley. How he will extricate himself he does not know, but with great courage he undertakes to solve the riddle of the Head of Adam.

* * *

The Thirteenth Opal.

(Continued From Page 21.)

it is the only country I know anything about. The United States is far, far away; it may be very different from all this——"

"Well, Yo Tambien?"

The boy looked up into his face. "But you are going there, and I want to go with you."

Having wired ahead to Limantour of their coming, the mine owner met them at the station, and escorted them to his own big limousine—one of the very few of which the city could boast at that period. As they rode along, Fellows recounted all which had taken place, while the owner of the Sangremal listened with eager attention. "I am only sorry, senor," Fellows said in conclusion, "that I did not learn the secret process for making those very excellent opals; that secret, I fear, has departed forever, along with the weary spirit of the 'Hermit of the Hill.'"

"And that," broke in Limantour, "is as it should be. You have done well in Queretaro; you have my deepest gratitude." He leaned over and directed the driver of the car to stop. Turning to Fellows he remarked: "See, senor, we are in front of the Sanchez establishment. Let us go in for a moment. I want to give certain testimony in your behalf."

They went inside.

At first, Placido Sanchez refused to see Fellows; then, learning that he was accompanied by the owner of the celebrated Sangremal, he graciously consented to admit them to his private office.

Here, after a very formal introduction, Limantour explained that he had merely dropped in to put the American right in the eyes of his former employer. Sanchez, obsessed with his own importance, took an entirely erroneous conclusion of the whole matter.

"Sorry, Fellows," he said pompously, "no opening just now; I'm afraid I can't place you——"

"Say, old-timer," Fellows broke in, "we didn't come here to ask you for a job!"

"No?"

"Not on your life! I wouldn't work another day for you if you gave me a deed to the store!"

Placidio, far from placid, began to show symptoms of an apoplectic attack.

"I—I thought you came to express regret——"

"Well, come to think of it, I have a regret to express," answered Fellows, complacently; "a regret that I didn't finish telling you where to head in that day, and that I didn't bust that fellow Nunez on the nose when I had the chance!"

Sanchez, tho staggered, came back for more.

"Anyhow, Fellows," he said, sneeringly, "you would hardly do for an establishment such as ours. I'm afraid you don't know much about opals——"

"Well, I guess you're about right, at that! And here's a little tip for you. Go over your stock—and take out the phony stones!"

They walked over to the door.

"And do this, too, for me, Sanchez, ol' scout; when you see Antonio Nunez, tell him to give my regards to his lop-eared cousin Juan!" Fellows turned to Limantour with a grin. "I guess all that will hold him for a while. Let's go."

It was while seated at a little dinner at the Hotel Iturbede that Fellows imparted to Limantour his intention of leaving at once for the United States. His former employer was disconsolate; he offered all sorts of inducements, and made fervent entreaties and appeals.

"Why should I not return, senor?" the American asked. "The former firm of Fellows & Smock, now Fellows, Tambien & Fellows, is on good financial footing again. My work in Mexico is ended; my quest completed. We leave tonight over the National Railroad for Laredo—and the good old U. S. A."

Limantour was silent, seeking some argument to bring forth. Finally he said: "Senor Fellows, once you told me that you would never leave Mexico until you found the man who made your father a bankrupt, and ruined his health, fortune and prosperity; do you remember saying that?"

"I do."

"Well?"

"I've kept my promise."

"You mean that—that you have found the man?"

Fellows lighted a cigar, leaned complacently back in his chair and smiled genially across at his former employer.

"Yes; that is just what I mean."

Limantour leaned closer. "Tell me about this; I must know all."

"You already know all—except one item, perhaps."

He reached over and patted the happy youngster beside him affectionately upon the head.

"Senor Limantour," he said, "the 'Hermit of the Hill'—was Simon Smock."

The End.

Simple Singing.

"OH, SAY," moaned the man who had on his slippers, "have a heart!"

"But, dearie," insisted the lady who was dressed, "I know you will enjoy it. Mr. Warbult is going to sing, and he sings so nicely, not a bit of affectation and no flourishes. Just sings right along as if he were singing for mere love of it."

"But I don't like that kind of singing," was the sad response. "I like singers that sing because they are paid to sing. Now this natural, straightforward singing, simple and unaffected tho it may be, I am not strong for it. It doesn't seem right.

"Take a bird in a tree. He sings because he enjoys it, but he gets all the action and fun out of it that he possibly can. He uses his head and his tail and his legs and his wings, just like a prima donna. A singer ought to do that. When a fellow just gets up and sings without making any faces or cutting any flubdubs he doesn't seem to me to be having any fun. He ought to be a little demonstrative. If he doesn't pull any faces and gestures appropriate to the words and music he is only running on one cylinder.

"Besides, he is not only missing a lot of fun himself, but he is cheating his audience. The audience expects flourishes and some grand stand stuff. The play of 'Hamlet' with Hamlet left out, is no tamer than your singer without flourishes. It is like Billy Sunday sans everything Sundayesque. It is like a sham battle without any sham."

"But listen, dearie," insisted the lady who was dressed up and determined to go to some place. "There is to be community singing and every one will have a chance, yourself included. They are going to sing 'The Long, Long Trail,' you know, the one you sing such a pretty bass with."

"All right," agreed the man, reluctantly discarding his slippers. "I'm going, but I want to state right here that there is no simple elegance about my basso."

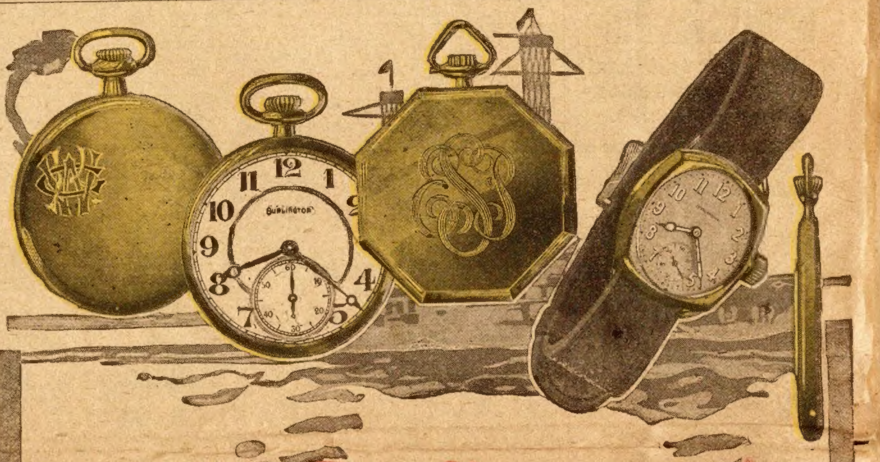
* * *

Impossible for Her.

A WOMAN went into an establishment to purchase some linen. She approached the floorwalker, who was knock-kneed and asked him to direct her to the linen department.

"Walk this way, please!" said the floorwalker. The woman looked at him and said:

"Lor', sir, if you were to give me all the linen in the shop for nothing, I couldn't walk that way."



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He Had His Suspicions.

HE WAS a pious old farmer, who was so sanctimonious that he fairly radiated piety everywhere he went. His most pronounced peculiarity was the habit of speaking slowly and painfully precise. He never used a slang phrase, and he chose the most genteel words in the dictionary to express himself even when he was angry or surprised.

His marked peculiarity made him the curiosity of the countryside. One day he sold his farm and announced that he would move to town. On the place was a carload of fat cattle. He had never been outside of his home county, and when he found that he could take a free trip to Chicago if he decided to ship his cattle himself instead of selling them to a livestock buyer, he decided that he'd go to Chicago with the steers.

Several weeks after his trip to Chicago and after he had taken up his abode in the city, he began to infest the village drug store. One night, when the crowd gathered around the prescription case, to talk politics, the pious old farmer took the floor and began to tell us about his trip to Chicago, and this is the way he wound up, with a sanctimonious and slow, drawly voice:

"There are a great many strange people in this world, are there not? During my stay in Chicago I saw so many, many men who were queer and peculiar. I declare, I never saw such a queer lot of men as are to be seen there at the stockyards. But, pshaw, the world seems to be full of queer people, does it not? Sometimes," he said after a long spell of hesitation "I think perhaps I am just a little queer myself."

The Purple Fish

(Continued From Page 22.)

cart with him. Poor Elsie was very unhappy, for she could not bear to think of spending her whole life on the island, and yet she did not want to marry a fish, even if her mamma were willing, which she was quite sure she would not be. But, as she was sitting there, making a wreath of the yellow violets, two seagulls came flying by. They stopped when they saw Elsie, and one of them said:

"Here, upon this purple island,
What do I see but a human chisland!"

"There isn't any such word as 'chisland!'" said Elsie. "It is 'child,' don't you know?"

"I am not very familiar with English," replied the seagull. "The other word rhymes better; but I am not prejudiced. What are you doing here, child?"

"Nothing!" replied Elsie. "If you please, did you ever marry a fish?"

Both the seagulls showed strong signs of disgust at this, and said:

"We . . . never marry them. Why do you ask?"

"Because the purple fish with the yellow tail said I must stay here all my life unless I would marry him. And he has taken away my green cart, so that I cannot get home."

"As to that," said the seagulls, "we can easily manage to get you home. Put your arms around our necks and hold on tight!"

So the seagulls flew away with Elsie, and brought her safely home. She kissed them and thanked them.

"What can I give you, dear seagulls," she asked, "in return for your saving me from that horrid fish?"

"Could you give us your golden curls?" asked the seagulls. . . .

No, Elsie could not do that.

"But," she said, "I can give you each a necklace of glass beads, fastened with a rosette of peach-colored ribbon. I made them yesterday for my dolls, but you are welcome to them."

"Just the thing!" said the seagulls.

So Elsie put the necklaces around their necks and they thanked her, and flew away. I have been told that they flew straight to the island and spent the whole afternoon in making rude remarks to the purple fish with the yellow tail, but one need not believe all one hears.

* * *

In Loving Memory.

AVAILING herself of her ecclesiastical privileges, the clergyman's wife asked questions which, coming from anybody else, would have been thought impertinent.

"I presume you carry a memento of some kind in that locket you wear?" she said.

"Yes, ma'am," said the parishioner. "It is a lock of my husband's hair."

"But your husband hasn't gone," the lady exclaimed.

"No, ma'am, but his hair 'as!"

Might Have Been Worse.

JOSEPH C. LINCOLN, the author, remarked at a social gathering that we are often too prone to complain about things that might be a whole lot worse, and told this anecdote as an example:

During a heated political campaign one of the party leaders became emotional over some matter that was printed about him in one of the local papers of his home town, and excitedly galloped into the sanctum of the editor.

"Look here," he boisterously exclaimed, with an accompanying dance, "what do you mean by printing all that stuff about me?"

"What's the matter with it?" asked the editor, without showing any symptoms of tacking on his wings and flying for the door.

"What's the matter with it?" shouted the perturbed politician. "Why, it is all lies, and you know it!"

"Well, then, what are you kicking about?" was the smiling rejoinder of the editor. "Suppose we had told the truth about you?"

* * *

Urgent Case.

THE young wife gazed upon the sleeping form of her young husband with the tender eyes of youth. As a matter of fact, hubby had got a cold, and he found it conducive to sleeplessness at night. It seemed a pity to disturb his repose, but her affection was equal to the task, and, shaking him gently by the shoulder, she said:

"Wake up, Georgie; the doctor's just sent your 'sleeping-draught!"

Classified Want Ads

Information— The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in Chicago Ledger is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

SELL OUR "WONDER SET" OF TOILET preparations with $1.50 silver berry spoon given as free premium to your customers, taking your orders under the "Madison System," in which we do all the delivery work and send you a commission check every Saturday. No money or letter of credit required. You can make $25 to $65 a week with this big seller. Northwestern Sales Company, 2049 L. C. Smith Building, Seattle, Washington.

MIRACLE MOTOR GAS STARTLES AUTO world. Equals gasoline; 3c gallon. Knocks out carbon. 300% profit—$20 daily. Sample free to each motorist your county. Isom, Idaho, wires: "Ship 600 packages. Made $62 yesterday." Investigate. R. Butler, Sec'y, 323 Gasby Bldg., Toledo, Ohio.

AGENTS—IF YOU HAVE A POSITION OR not you can sell our fraternity buttons, jewelry, diamonds and watches, besides your other work; new offer; no experience necessary; goods sell themselves; everybody buys; write for particulars, free. Charles A. Keene, Dept. 9, 180 Broadway, New York.

AGENTS: SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTED 36x68 rugs, $1 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 115 in four days; profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory; sample rug by parcel post prepaid 98c. Condon, Importer, Stonington, Maine.

AGENTS—$50 WEEKLY AND YOUR FALL suit free. Sell our famous popular priced made to measure suits. Big, steady income guaranteed. Complete outfit free. Act quick. The Commonwealth Tailors, Dept. 611, 19 So. Wells St., Chicago.

BIG MONEY MAKER—THOUSANDS SOLD; beautiful lithographed honor roll in colors, space for photo; sweethearts, wives and mothers will buy on sight. Retails 50 cents; send 25 cents for sample. Acme Picture Co., 164 Williams St., Buffalo, N. Y.

YOUNG MAN, WOULD YOU ACCEPT AND wear a fine tailor-made suit just for showing it to your friends? Then write Banner Tailoring Co., Dept. 23, Chicago, and get beautiful samples, styles and a wonderful offer.

DOLLAR AN HOUR SURE—MEN, WOMEN, sell Menthol Ointment. Leave on trial. Trial is sale. Good side line. Credit and freight allowed. Sample free. Horner Mfg., 540, Pittsburgh, Pa.

AGENTS—A NEW ONE: HARPER'S FIBRE Broom and Ten-Use Brush Set Combined. Saves broom expense; lightens housework; easy seller; first order returnable. Harper Brush Works, Dept. B, Fairfield, Iowa.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPREsentatives to sell shirts, underwear, hosiery, dresses, waists, skirts, direct to homes. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 503 Broadway, New York City.

WANTED—GOOD, RELIABLE WOMEN TO show housewives how to cut expenses with our new "Household Guide." Beginners can clear $5 to $10 daily. Outfit free. Write Nichols Co., Box M, Naperville, Ill.

AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINAtions everywhere in November. Government clerk, railway mail, teacher, immigrant inspector, typewriter, research clerk. Salary $1,200-$2,000. Experience unnecessary. Men, women desiring Government positions write for free particulars. J. C. Leonard (former Civil Service Examiner), 405 Kenois Building, Washington, D. C.

NAMES & ADDRESSES WANTED, $12.50 per hundred paid. Attractive spare time work for men & women. Copyists also wanted. Enclose stamp for particulars. Bostion & Co., E. LeGore, Md.

HELP WANTED—(Continued)

WANTED IMMEDIATELY—MEN-WOMEN, 18 or over. $100 month. Thousands [illegible] Government war positions open. Write immediately for free list. Franklin Institute, Dept. W 29, Rochester, N. Y.

MALE HELP WANTED

WE ESTABLISH YOU; PLANS FREE; IN the profitable carpet and rug cleaning business. Own boss; sure road to independence; $8, $10, and more, daily. Can employ agents; build up big increasing business; repeat orders; sole territory and no limit to possibilities. Rescol Mfg. Co., 1037 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL, POST OFfice, rural carrier "exams" everywhere soon. Get prepared by former Government civil service examiner. Booklet free. Arthur Robert Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN, 8 hours, $140. Colored porters wanted everywhere. Experience unnecessary. 686 Ry. Bureau, East St. Louis, Ills.

MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UNnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, reports. Salaries; expenses. American-Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPORtunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 520 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES EARN MONEY CROCHETING, sewing, tatting, making aprons and dust caps from our especially designed, exclusive, economical patterns. We can't supply the demand. Send 25c for patterns and plans. Money returned if dissatisfied. Kenwood Sales Service, 6240D So. Park Ave., Chicago.

WANTED, TEN BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES to travel, demonstrate and sell well known goods to established dealers. $25.00 to $50.00 per week; railroad fare paid; weekly advance for traveling expenses. Address at once, Goodrich Drug Company, Dept. 85, Omaha, Nebr.

GIRLS-WOMEN WANTED. GOVERNMENT war positions. $100 month. Promotion. 30,000 vacancies. Office work. Experience unnecessary. List positions free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. W 27, Rochester, N. Y.

WOMEN TO SEW. GOODS SENT PREpaid to your door; plain sewing; steady work; no canvassing. Send stamped envelope for prices paid. Universal Co., Dept. 54, Philadelphia, Pa.

MICHIGAN FARM LAND FOR SALE

OWN A FARM HOME. ASK ABOUT OUR week end excursions to our hardwood lands in Michigan's best counties. 40,000 acres. $15 to $30 per A. Easy terms for wage earners and farm renters. Grains, stock, fruit, truck, chickens. Big booklet free. Swigart Land Company. Oldest company in the business. X1245 1st Nat'l Bk. Bldg., Chicago, Illinois.

INVENTIONS

INVENTIONS COMMERCIALIZED. CASH OR royalty. Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 44A, St. Louis, Mo.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

RESULTS COUNT. $1 DOES IT. [illegible] may prove $200 monthly or more. Bank references furnished. We invite a thorough investigation. Maps, reports, established facts Free. Address Sourlake Texas Oil Co., 566 DeMenil, St. Louis, Mo.

SILVER PRODUCING MINES MAKING MILlionaires through small investments. Address: Midwest Investment Bureau, Boston Block, Minneapolis, Minn.

FREE 3 MONTHS TO GET ACQUAINTED, The Western Miner, 2545 W. 37th Avenue, Denver, Colo.

WILL PAY CASH FOR LIBERTY BONDS. Write for information. United Bond Co., Palace Bldg., Minneapolis, Minnesota.

MOTION PICTURE BUSINESS

LARGE PROFITS DAILY MADE IN THIS business. Openings everywhere. Small capital starts you. Complete outfits sold on installments. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Morton Building, Chicago.

$75.00 BUYS COMPLETE MOVING PICture business. Machine, film, screen, etc. Wonderful openings everywhere. Start now. Big profits made. No experience. Only $75.00 required. Details free. Dept. F 4, Feature Film Exchange, 228 Union Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

PATENTS

IDEAS WANTED. THEY BRING WEALTH if patented. Send postal for Needed Inventions, List of Patent Buyers and Guide Book. Tells how to secure patent through our credit plan. Randolph & Co., Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

INVENT SOMETHING. YOUR IDEAS MAY bring wealth. Free book tells what to invent and how to obtain a patent. References: Dun, Bradstreet and Washington Mechanics' Bank. Talbert & Talbert, 4276 Talbert Building, Washington, D. C.

SONG POEMS WANTED

WRITE THE WORDS FOR A SONG. WE write music and guarantee publisher's acceptance. Submit poems on war, love or any subject. Chester Music Co., 538 So. Dearborn St., Suite 106, Chicago.

TOBACCO HABIT

TOBACCO OR SNUFF HABIT CURED OR no pay. $1.00 if cured. Remedy sent on trial. Superba Co., TC, Baltimore, Md.

OLD COINS WANTED

WILL PAY $75.00 FOR 1884 TRADE DOLlar; 10 cents for 1912 nickels, S. Mint. We buy for cash premiums all rare coins and bills, all rare old cents to dollars. Send 4c now. Get our large coin circular. Numismatic Bank, Dept. 12, Fort Worth, Texas.

MEN

GET VITAL STRENGTH—RETAIN YOUTHful vigor. Easy, sure, drugless. Particulars free. Winslow D. Chase, Washington, D. C.

MEDICAL

SUFFERERS FROM KIDNEY AND BLADder trouble, causing backache, nervousness, tired and worn out feeling, frequent desire to urinate, smarting and burning. Do not suffer any longer but write us for free symptom blank and advice. Hinse Medical Institute, 23 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

INDIGESTION AND HEART TROUBLE INstantly relieved by wearing my medicated ring. Price $1.00; money refunded if not satisfied. F. Snyder, 300 West 121st St., N. Y. City.

DON'T SUFFER WITH STOMACH TROUble. My tablets relieve instantly. Trial [illegible] troit, Mich.

"5 DAY ECZEMA CURE," BY ONE CURED after doctors and everything else failed. Formula, $1.00. Zone, St. George, Ga.

BELGIAN HARES

RAISE BELGIAN HARES FOR US. WE furnish stock and pay you $5.00 a pair and express for all you can raise. Profits immense. Instruction book and contract 10c; nothing free. Wm. Dammann, Dept. 5, Egg Harbor, N. J.

MISCELLANEOUS

SPECIAL!!! INCH DISPLAY ADVERTISEment 100 magazines thrice $8. Coast-to-Coast Syndicate, Atlantic City.

PERSONAL

MARRY. THOUSANDS CONGENIAL PEOple, worth from $1,000 to $50,000 seeking early marriage; descriptions, photos, introductions free. Sealed. Either sex. Send no money. Address Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Ill.

MARRY AT ONCE, WE PUT YOU IN CORrespondence with thousands of charming and refined ladies who wish to marry, many worth from $1,000 to $25,000 and upwards. Particulars free. Address Allen Ward, B 520, Valley, Nebr.

NOTICE—ANTIES, GERMAN SECRET, solves the prohibition problem (something out of the ordinary); just the proposition you are looking for; easy, simple and reliable. Write J. A. Short, Box 435, Stephenville, Tex.

WEAK, NERVOUS, RUN DOWN MEN; REmember, we cure chronic, nervous, blood, kidney, bladder and private diseases. Book, symptom blank and advice free sealed. Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL magazine published mailed free. Ladies send age, description. American Distributor, Blairsville, Pa.

MARRY—MOST SUCCESSFUL "HOME Maker;" hundreds rich; confidential; reliable; descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Mrs. Purdie, Box 556, Oakland, Calif.

MARRY—LADIES AND GENTLEMEN; names, addresses, desiring marriage, 25c. Hamiltons Correspondent, Barnes City, Iowa.

WOULD YOU MARRY REFINED WIDOW worth $500,000? Address Mrs. Hill, 14 East Sixth St., Jacksonville, Fla.

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Only **$2.50** with Order

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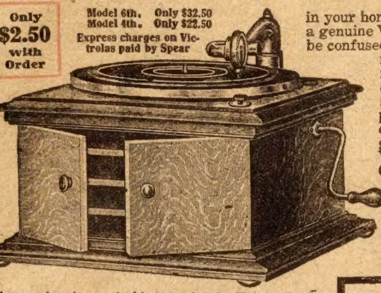

in your home at our risk. This is a genuine Victrola and should not be confused with ordinary talking machines with other names. Return it at our expense if your satisfaction is not complete. You will not be out a penny. This is a genuine 6th Victor-Victrola in Beautiful Golden Quartered Oak; up-to-date model with all the Victor improvements; 12-inch turn-table. Size of base is 15x 16½ inches. Reproduces every atom of music a record contains, in full, rich, strong tones. **Price only $32.50.**

If you prefer a lower-priced instrument, order Victrola 4th. Its design, quality, etc., are about the same as 6th except that it is smaller; the base measures 13 x 14 inches. Has 10-inch turn-table. Plays any record. **Price only $22.50. Terms on both the same; $2.50 cash, $2.50 monthly.** Express charges on Victrolas paid by Spear. Be sure to state carefully which you want, 6th or 4th. Either sent on 30 days approval, with Spear money-back offer. Both instruments will play all Victor or Columbia Records. Record catalogs on request.

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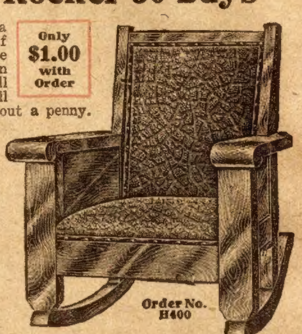
Only **$1.00** with Order

Enjoy its comfort and repose a whole month at our risk. Then if your satisfaction with both article and price is not complete, return the rocker at our expense. We will refund your first payment and all freight costs—you will not be out a penny.

The finish is a Beautiful Fumed Oak. All the woodwork is thoroughly seasoned solid oak. The wide arms, big heavy front posts, solid panel sides and high back are features that guarantee not only comfort and appearance, but years and years of wear with the hardest use.

The deep, wide seat is built over a high-grade, long-lasting spring support which is covered with sanitary upholstering materials. The outer covering is our famous brown Spanish artificial leather. The back is upholstered in the same way.

Price Only $9.95



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Order No. H400. Terms $1.00 with order, $1.00 monthly. Total Price $9.95.

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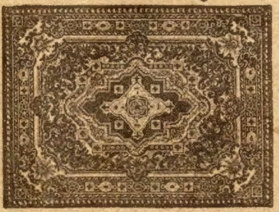

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Only **$2.00** with Order

A big, handsome center medallion—extra large rose clusters in corners—leaf effect throughout the field—old gold scrolls—dainty daisies—a combination of tan, green, red and other colorings. Made of all-worsted yarns. The heavy back makes it cling close to the floor. Will give better wear and longer service than you would get from a rug purchased elsewhere at this price. Sent on 30 days' trial and use. Shipping weight only 22 pounds.

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No. H5060, size 8 ft. 6 in. x 11 ft., price $19.95. Terms: $2.00 with order, $2.00 a month

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Notwithstanding the prevailing high cost of everything my prices are still Bargain Prices. They are still much lower than you have to pay your home stores.

Send for my New, Big, Free Fall and Winter Catalog (now ready) and let me prove to you that, war or no war, "Spear Sells For Less." See the fine, big, clear pictures of thousands of beautiful, useful and necessary things for the home. Read how I give

The Longest Time to Pay

My monthly payments are the smallest, my terms are the easiest. No matter what you need in home furnishings you will do best at Spear's—Bargain Prices Always, and the Very Lowest Payments. That is why thousands of customers buy everything they need from me.

Money Back Offer on Everything

No matter what you order—be it a single chair or a big houseful of furniture your satisfaction must be complete as to price, quality and terms or I will return your money. Everything I sell is sent on 30 Days' Trial and Use. This means that you can return anything in this time and not be out a penny. I will refund your payment and all freight charges. Be sure to write today for my Handsome Free Catalog. Send the coupon.

NATHANIEL SPEAR, President

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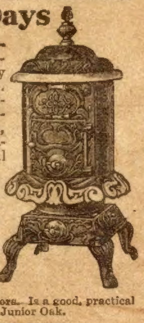
Dept. C **Pittsburgh, Pa.**

Burn a Fire in this Oak Heater 30 Days

Only **$1.00** with Order



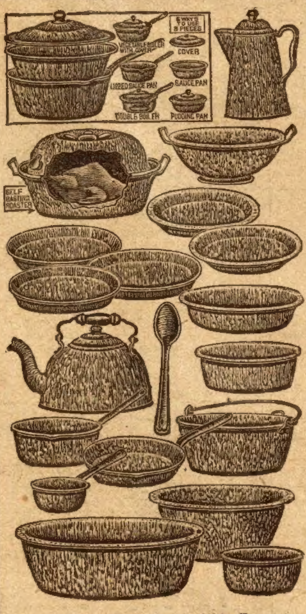
Completely equipped; ready to set up. Has a cast-iron fire-pot, with heavy front, top and base, attractively designed. Full nickel trimmed. Guaranteed to give entire satisfaction. Has a complete set of dampers which insure easy regulation of heat and economy in fuel consumption. Shaker and dump grate. Nickel parts include foot rails, top ring, urn and screw dampers. This heater has a strong steel body with convenient feed and ash pit doors. Is a good, practical and serviceable low-priced Junior Oak.

MADE IN TWO SIZES

No. H15 is 48 in. high with 15 in. fire pot, price $11.45
No. H17 is 53 in. high with 17 in. fire pot, price $15.45

Shipped on 30 days' trial and use. Terms on either stove: $1.00 Cash with Order. $1.75 per Month.

Important: Be sure to order the right size. It is better to have a heater a little too large than one too small. A larger stove gives more heat on a smaller consumption of fuel, and is therefore more economical to operate.



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Use This Big 24-Piece "Old Hampshire" Gray Enamel Set 30 Days

Only **$1.00** with Order

The best on the market. Not made in the ordinary way. Manufactured by a special process, which makes it exceedingly durable and very attractive. Has a mottled baked-on enamel over the sheet-iron base that is far superior to the many cheap utensils on the market. We guarantee this set to give extraordinary service.

This Set Consists of Queen cooker (6 uses), 2-quart coffee-pot, large roaster, colander, 3 10-inch cake pans, 2 10-inch pie pans, 5-quart teakettle, 12-inch spoon, wash-basin, pudding pan, lipped saucepan, 9-inch frying pan, large lipped preserving kettle, dipper, large mixing bowl, dish pan and batter bowl.

Price Only $9.95 Order on 30 days' trial and use. Your money will be refunded and we will pay express both ways if you are not thoroughly pleased.

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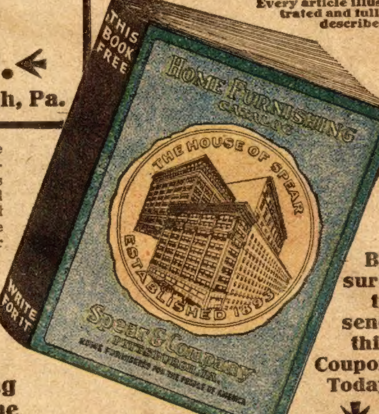

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SPEAR & CO., Dept. C, Pittsburgh, Pa.

I would like to know all about the Spear Open Account, Easy Payment Plan for home furnishing. Please send me, free, your Complete Bargain Catalog with Prices, Terms, and Information, without the slightest obligation on my part.

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